

# CINEMA

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## Papers

JULY 1987  
ISSUE 64  
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# CINEMA *Papers*

No 64

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# MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE BANK

What's the latest in the long-running film bank saga? KATHRYN BICE reports.

AFTER MONTHS of heated debate about the Australian Film Commission's (AFC) proposal for a film bank, it might seem that things have gone strongly silent on this front recently. But the campaign is far from over; it has just been going on behind closed doors in the Canberra labyrinth.

As David Court, the AFC policy adviser who has mediated the proposal from its infancy, said: "There have been rumour fires flying around that the film bank concept is dead, but in fact we're exactly on target."

The future shape of the film industry depends largely on how opinion divides on the day the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, Kerry Cohen, presents to Cabinet his formal submission on the options for government assistance.

Since the AFC presented its report to Mr Cohen in April, it has been lobbying for its preferred option in both the bureaucratic and the political wings of government.

Usually, when a major policy decision is on the agenda, the relevant department prepares a draft cabinet submission for its minister's consideration. If the minister approves the draft, it is then circulated among other government departments which may be affected by the change.

When the departments have made their "co-ordinating comments" — often just a few paragraphs outlining their reservations about the proposal — the minister can go to cabinet knowing where his potential supporters and opponents are coming from.

The departments most likely to have some influence over the future of the industry are the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Treasury, Finance, Communications and Industry, Technology and Commerce. Their respective ministers are Bob Hawke, Paul Keating, Peter Walsh, Michael Duffy and John Howard.

Though it is impossible to know which way each of these will jump, it is safe to guess that Treasury, which

holds the purse strings, would support the film finance corporation, on principle at least.

In taking for preference short-term loans through direct grants rather than off-balance sheet assistance through for-profit tax revenue, such as IFFA proceeds, was one of the factors that shaped the AFC's preference for the film bank in the first place.

Under the proposal, the film bank would cost the government \$20 million to establish. It could then raise additional funds on the money market to enable it to make "soft" loans worth up to \$100 million a year.

These could be converted to equity in projects which turned a good profit or written off if a project bombed at the box office, giving the film bank enough flexibility to subsidise risky projects with the profits from commercial successes. The expected losses would cost the government an additional \$56 million a year.

The final model to be complemented by a \$30 million special fund to make grants to low-budget drama and documentaries, plus changes to the tax laws to encourage more investment by companies involved in film and TV production.

Though Ray Cohen has not declared his hand openly, there is some evidence that he favours the concept of a film bank. There is also growing bipartisan support for the idea.

The Cultural Ministers' Council, which is made up of the arts ministers from all states and territories, met in Melbourne in May. Their communiqué "affirmed the importance to Australian cultural life of a viable, independent film and television production industry".

The ministers "endorsed the proposal for a film finance corporation" and went on to recommend that, "if this cannot be achieved because of budgetary constraints, the Commonwealth should maintain the multi-faceted approach to government assistance to the industry with its commitment, direct

funding, Australian content regulations and other measures".

Even if the proposal is adopted in Cabinet, a significant mark hangs over the timing of the bank's establishment. If it is drafted with the current budget process, there is a chance the bank might be up and running by 1 January 1990. If left until the budget sitting of Parliament after August, quick implementation becomes less and less likely.

In recent months, the AFC has been working for Canberra back party thoroughly. It has lobbied the bureaucracy through meetings with representatives from the relevant departments and has also moved in on the political wing of government, leading the Labor Party caucus committee on Education and the Arts and the Communications subcommittee. "The general response was cautious," said David Court, "but we feel it's been quite a constructive process".

Other industry bodies have also been trying to influence the decision-making process. A delegation from the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPA) met Mr Cohen in April to put its case for a retailised Division IFFA.

"The minister confirmed that it was not the government's intention to dismantle IFFA," said Ross Denney, the president of SPAA, "but he also said it was unlikely to be rigged upwards to take into account the lower marginal tax rates".

"We made a clear case, if a film bank was inevitable, our support for it was absolutely conditional on it being completely independent rather than a part of the AFC, and it being funded not, at the very least, to the level envisaged in the discussion paper".

Because of that fundamental agreement on issues such as Australian content, Action Equity and the Australian Writers Guild are co-ordinating their activity. As a start, Equity asked a number of "internationally known Australian actors" to write to Bob Hawke and

Paul Keating and urge them to support the film bank proposal, and Ann Litman, Equity's federal media manager.

The Australian Theatrical and Amusement Employees Association has been philosophical with administrators, according to Charles Livingstone, the association's federal research officer. "But we've been wary the various forums to insist that the notion of media ownership and the future of the film industry are deeply related," he said.

"What's the point of having a film bank if media ownership is so constrained that it would be dominated by vertically integrated companies?"

The government's number one problem for decisions based on hard facts rather than on emotion for supporters of the film bank. In a political climate favouring austerity, the upfront demand for nearly \$300 million might be unappealing, even if it is made by an industry which seems to have wide community support. There is a trend in some government circles to wait for the dust to settle after 90 days and see how much money is raised under IFFA, this year. If the answer is within "acceptable limits", that is, if the reduction to 120/20 per cent does seem to have "put a cap" on the revenue drain, then there may be some support for the retention of IFFA.

To pre-empt this tactic, the AFC is arguing that 1988-89 might turn out to be an exceptional year because of the high number of international 120/20 per cent projects on offer, the delay to introducing the reduced marginal tax rates and the big money made on the sharemarket which investors wanted to shelter until the 48 per cent marginal rate came in on 1 July.

To lend weight to its arguments, in May the AFC conducted a survey of merchant banks and brokers on their predictions of the market for IFFA films in 1987-88. The results, said Paddy Chapman, the AFC's director of special projects, were "very pessimistic".

■ Comedy and adventure are the dominant film genres in the recent announcements by De Laurentiis Entertainment Ltd (DEL) of its 1987/88 film production packages. Three comedies and three adventure films are in development to add to the DEL slate which includes Bruce Beresford's directing of a futuristic thriller, *Tinal Kowal*, and the miniseries adaptation of *The Polar Shores*. Robert Hughes' book about convict Australia.

Vice president of production for DEL, John Turner was in Australia in June, saying as much and having a look around, when the announcement of the six projects was made. Another three are close to signing.

The comedies in development are *The Adam Who Sued God*, written by Patrick McCarville and John Clarke, *Bright Boy*, written

by David Salin, *Spring Swags*, written by Marcus Cole and Christine Schofield, to be directed by Cole. The adventures are *Maxwell Island*, written by Dennis Whitmore, *The Thin Line*, being developed by Francesco Finamore and Ian Bradley, *Black And White*, written by Bruce Macoski, Mike Mulligan and Bob Stewart, to be directed by Stewart.

DEL is aiming to turn out 70 to 80 million dollars of production a year, a task not made easier by what looks like production Ian Bradley describes as "a problem in finding mass appeal, commercial films". The projects confirmed will have budgets around the \$10 million mark. Combined with the \$18 million budget for *The Polar Shores* and \$12 million plus for *Tinal Kowal*, DEL should comfortably fill its target.



Mom, How Do You Spell Gorbunoff?

Crash: Uncle Gorbunoff

The Huge Adventures Of Terror A Car

The Australian Trustees Of Media (ATOM) awards for short educational films and video for 1987 were presented in May. Winners were:

#### Animation

General: *Joshua Cooks* (director Penny Robinson)  
Children's: *The Huge Adventures Of Terror A Car* (John Taylor)

Highly Commended: *Elephant Theatre* (Sabrina Schmidt)

#### Social Issues

General: *Shady's Party* (Clare Woodland)  
Children's: *Mom, How Do You Spell Gorbunoff?* (Pamela Williams)

Highly Commended: *Pop Movie, The Myth Of London* (Ray Arps)

#### Science And Nature

General: *North And South* (Stephen Barrett)  
Highly Commended: *Eye Deer* (Tim McParland)

#### Documentary

General: *Chin, Nam Gamba* (David Bradbury)

Highly Commended: *Arquibut* (Chris Nash)

#### Narrative

General: *Piggy/Piggy* (Carole Skias)

Children's: *The Pookbook Thing* (Mark Osburn)

Highly Commended: *The Mungie's Funeral* (Peter McNaught)

#### Territory

General: *The Huge Adventures Of Terror A Car* (John Taylor)

Highly Commended: *Musings* (Roman West)

#### General

General: *Children's, Why'd The Devil Cross The Road?* (Jan Strating)

Highly Commended: *The Big And* (Richard Gendle)

#### Australian

General: *Ten Years After* / *Ten Years Older* (Anna Kervan)

Children's: *Banish* (Jim Dunn)

#### International

General: *My Life Without Steve* (Gillian Lindsay)

#### Jury Prize

General: *Nature* (Rita Gibson)

Criticism: *Resonance Award*

General: *Converge With Dede* (Terry Wright)

■ The National Film and Sound Archive has acquired the single surviving screen print of Australia's first all-talking feature film, *Sheep's Look, The*. The 35-minute film was directed by Norman Davis, the American director of *For The Term Of His Natural Life*. *Sheep's Look* was Australia's first musical, and it was also famous for its experiments with optical effects, including a scene where the brother's eyes appear to grow larger and roll around as a result of questions from smoking a pipe. It premiered in Sydney in 1914.

■ Penny Robins is the new manager of the Australian Film Commission's Women's Film Fund (WFF). The WFF has been relocated to Melbourne.

■ Hilary Forling has been appointed director, special projects at the Australian Film Commission, with responsibility for administration of the Special Production Fund and the Special Projects Fund. She has worked as a producer, writer, script editor and researcher. Her most recent projects were the feature *The Place At The Cross*, which she wrote and produced, and the documentary *Don't Call Me Gorbunoff*, which she produced.

■ The Australian Film Commission has awarded its 1987 documentary fellowship to David and Judith MacDougall, and Dennis O'Rourke. Since their arrival in Australia from the United States, David and Judith MacDougall have made some 18 documentaries about Aboriginals. David MacDougall is director of the film unit at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Dennis O'Rourke has made many prize-winning documentaries, several in the South Pacific region, since the late 1970s. His most recent film, *Half Life*, was a feature-length documentary on the effects of US atomic testing on the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands (See Cinema Pages 16, March 1988).

The fellowship, each valued at a minimum of \$148,000, enable fellows to make a film of their own choosing. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation pre-purchases such film.

Dear Mr Hendry,

I was most interested to read Mary Colburn's article on the recent cinematists' conference ('While They Dream', cinematists talk) in the May issue of Cinema Papers.

However I'd like to comment on an inaccuracy in reporting Mary Colburn, in discussing the Writers' Guild's position on the APC's proposed Film Bank, quotes the Guild as asking whether writers would be able to approach the bank without producers. The Guild said it did not ask this question, a question which demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding of the APC's proposal, which is not for another funding body but a production "loan" corporation. The question came from the floor at the session being reported and was never put by me or any other Guild official.

Apologies from — thanks for a stimulating and interesting response

Yours sincerely,  
Angie Wade,  
Executive Officer, APTC

## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Jim Schuster** is a journalist at The Age.

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IMPORTANCE: Special jury prize

# CANNES

**A thousand and one deals, 950 miles of film — what else does the Cannes Film Festival add up to? PHILIPPA HAWKER reports.**

THE MOST tangible thing about Cannes is its intangibility: you can go looking for "Cannes" and not find it anywhere, precisely because it is everywhere, all the time. Finding it *there* is impossible.

First of all, there are the films. In 1987, 30 feature films were shown at the main program, not all in competition. There are scores more screenings at sidebar events like "Le Cinéma Voyagé," the "Section Internationale," "Cinéma World," and the canonically-run "Cinéma Français," which is a bit more like a conventional film festival.

There are also the hundreds of films on show at an on sale in the market place, everything from *Thelma & Louise* to *When Alpha One A Star Moving*. Then to the *House Of Bernard Alba*. The market stands are in the basement of the large neo-punk bunker that is the new Palais des Festivals building, while the films screen in the casinos (theater) around the streets of Cannes, or in small theaters in the Palais building.

Then there are the various sales offices at hotels along the Croisette, the 11800 metre strip that runs along the shore from the new Palais to the Hotel Martinez. But for the marketers, business is conducted elsewhere: at parties, lunches, lunches, or bars, at spontaneous "let's make a deal" sessions, all the formal and informal encounters that could happen anywhere from the

Wentzelsdorf party to the blue bar to the left of the Hotel Majestic.

Negotiating these buying and selling sessions can seem relatively easy compared to the difficulties of getting into a 7:30 pm competition screening if you are not wearing enough dress, or getting into the festival grounds itself without a pass. (Lovers have long been banned for their unruly, and screening concerns about terrorism has made security tighter in recent years. As the official festival guide puts it: "The sacred perimeter has been defined around the Palais des Festivals and is subjected to very stringent surveillance.") But the closest thing to an explosion in the last decade was the *quasi* riot (spelled in *jean-luc Godard*'s face) in 1985.

Dealing with the intangible market place is gnawing even for the veteran producer. The Australians at Cannes could take advantage of two bases: the Producer Sales Office on the first floor of the Hotel Majestic, and the Australian Film Commission penthouse, next to the old Palais building, which has a more social function. Tom Broadbent, the Screen Production Association representative at the festival, emphasizes that contacts are vital but that it is a way to get lost in the crowd. "It's the most difficult market in the world, because it's all over the place. You need to zero in very quickly on the half-

dozen distributors you need to talk to."

Greg Smith, director of Film Victoria, also emphasizes that "You would be lost without forward planning. You can go to all the parties and try to see thousands of people and be frustrated at every level." He believes that representatives like Film Victoria and the Australian Film Commission can assist local producers with small-scale "strategic" events planned well in advance and targeted to the distribution companies and networks interested in Australian product.

Cannes provides information as copiously as it produces longform Publications like *Le Film Français* and *Screen International* (check out daily editions), magazines publish festival specials, a closed circuit television system feeds press conferences live-action news interviews and reports, and four hours of English language festival stories a day, put together by *Hollywood Reporter*. And the 1988 or so photographers, press, radio and television journalists who cover the event maintain an eternal, increasingly frustrated vigilance over everything that moves.

There is always plenty to monitor. There is a constant stream of stars, ex-stars and ageing stars ready to feed or interview publicity from the beach, although since the 1970s, as critic Marianne Garry points out, the directors have often overexposed the actors in the publicity stakes.

There are a few notable absences. Woody Allen still didn't come (it would have been out of character). Ronald Biggs didn't (it would have been extremely unusual). *Lawrence of Arabia* also did. They came, but not much gets said. Press conferences tend to produce candidates for best acting awards, or overcast in mutual incomprehension.

Allen Goh came to talk about her film with Lindsay Anderson, *The Mirror Of August*, and to describe herself as "about as funny as an open grave, but I couldn't make them laugh." Diane Kurast came to speak about her idiosyncratic documentary *Arènes*, and to ask the press conference, in best Anne Hall style, whether anyone in *Barbare* was Catholic. (Victory Rourke questioned about the relationship between suffering and art, sighed deeply and mumbled Methodically, "The suffering right now.") Paul Newman, who had come to produce the first film *The Glass Menagerie* was the first "billion" film screen at a Tennessee Williams play, was

asked by a woman from a French radio station whether he was free for lunch. Menahem Golan turned up and held forth at every event with which Cannes had the least connection.

Godard brought his liberally puritanic work-in-progress notion of *Krig Jure*, a Cannes-financed epic whose real interest seemed to be in the process, rather than the product, would Norman Mailer and Woody Allen play later and the *Hotel* if they didn't, who would? The answer turned out to be Jacques Rivette and Godard himself — Mailer and Allen made fleeting appearances — with Molly Ringwald in an extremely plain *Cordelia*.

After the screening, Godard got up on stage and, endorsed by television cameras, gave an intensely cryptic performance: he told a disoriented and disenchanted collective of journalists and critics that of course he hadn't read the play, and probably never would. It was a Cannes press conference from which Menahem Golan was conspicuously absent.

France's film press is impressionist account of the need to "save European cinema" through co-production, but its own film exemplified some of the problems that brought the ponderous adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *Chronicle Of A Death Foretold*, filmed patently in Spanish with a cast that combined Greek, English, French, Italian and Spanish actors, proved that a United Nations approach to filmmaking doesn't work, no matter how striking the images on

**I'VE HEARD THE NORMALS SINGING: Director's Foreplay**









MASTROIANI: Best actor

the screen might be. *Dante Quay's* *A Man In Love* — a French/Italian/American cast in a film about an American actor playing Count Fosco who falls in love with an Italian American girl who lives in Paris — suffered similar identity crises. So did the Taviani brothers' *Good Morning, Babylon*, which tend to make us believe that a pair of Italian artists who escaped the elephant status for the simple sequence in *Intolerance* were the unusual hero of early Hollywood cinema. There were, of course, exceptions — *Melina* from *Dark Days and Wonders: The Ways Of Desire*, for example. But it was interesting to contrast the international film with 'smaller'.

less grandiose works that had the courage of their pastoral convictions. One of the successes of *Director's* *Toronto*, for example, was Canadian Patricia Basmari's *I've Heard The Music*. *Seppie*, the whimsically very story of an 'ungraciously impaired' woman whose confidence is undermined by the sophisticated art gallery owner for whom she works. It won the International Critics' Federation award, and was sold in most major territories in the market place.

Another critical, popular and market success was *Wah You Wah* from Hong Kong, the theatrical debut from David Leung, who wrote, among other things, *Mata* (and *Personal Services*). Seen on an English satellite town in the films, it is a bleak, racist, comically depressing story of a rebellious adolescent girl. The British film, helped by the publicity surrounding the British Pavilion, and the presence of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, registered the greatest impact at a national level.

Many Australian features came to the market (period), or had been screened at the American Film Market, which took the wind out of the Cannes sails.

Travelling *March*, despite having only a single screening at Cannes was very well received, and Leo McKern's presence there helped to

publicise it. It was sold to Cinescope (Columbia in the US, and a British sale is still under negotiation. "It's a film that has to be carefully handled," according to producer Ben Cramer, who believes that a Cannes screening gets it the right sort of attention.

Bill Bennett's *A Guest To Die* and *Backlash* will receive theatrical and Channel Four screenings in Britain, the USA's *Alive* films acquired (Stephen Holman's *Against The Odds*) in 30 Ways, and Colin Eggleston's thriller *Cassandro* was bought by Virgin.

Lucretia McKern's *Palsade*, a 15-minute short about the dreams of a Sydney postage collector, shot entirely at night, and mostly around the Rocks area of Sydney, took out the Golden Palm for the best short film in the festival. It was the only Australian work in competition.

Frank Sheel's *The Spies* was screened in *Director's* *Toronto*, but did not live up to the 'in the style of *Sam Fuller*' tag with which it was misleadingly endowed. The Australian showing was a considerable success to last year, when *The Prince* (Dessler) was in competition, *Backlash*, *Burke And Wills*, *A Cat's Claw Story*, *Paradise* (Moreno) and *2 Friends In Un Certain Regard*. *Devil In The Flesh* in *Critics' Week* and *Ass Talking* in Cannes (januar *Post*), in

the short film competition, was the only Australian film to carry off an award.

Invited films can sink into oblivion quickly enough, even those singled out for prizes. But a higher public and market profile inevitably results when Australian films are officially selected. Budget constraints meant that the Australian Film Commission's traditional party on the beach was cancelled, all in all, it was a subdued Australian presence. There was a widely expected hope that an Australian film would make it into competition next year... or else.

## PRIZEWINNERS

Best film: *Under The Sun Of Sagan* (director Maurice Pialat)  
Director's prize: *Wen Wenden, The Ways Of Desire*  
Special jury prize: *Repentance* (Toros Abuladze)  
Jury prize: *Angelique* (Saulwynon Chardacene) — *Path To Party* (Antonio Mikali)  
Best short film: *Palsade* (Lucretia McKern)  
Best first film: *My English Grandfather* (Scharnhorst)  
Lifetime achievement award: *Francesca Ferris*  
Best actor: Marcello Mastroianni (*Dark Days*)  
Best actress: Barbara Hershey (*My People*)

# FESTIVAL PRIZE WINNERS

## Winners in the Melbourne Film Festival Short Competition were:

- *Palsade* (Lucretia McKern) and *The Night Before To The Minelists* (Christina Milwood) — Green Radio Prize for best Australian film
- *Attack On A Bakery* (Mato Pankajew) — City of Melbourne Award for best film
- *Attack On A Bakery* — Tattersall Award for best fiction film
- *The Air Catcher* (Andreas Claessens) — Herald and Weekly Times Award for best documentary
- *The Dream Machine* (Derek Jansen) — Schwartz Publishing Award for best experimental film
- *Spontaneous! Flap Acquired* — Cinema Award for best student film

## Winners of the 1987 Greater Union Awards for Australian Short Films (Sydney Film Festival) were:

- *Shopping Town* (David Cramer) — Greater Union Award for best film in the general category
- *Rock Star* (Charles Sandford) — Greater Union Award for best film in the fiction category
- *Making Decent* (Sharon Laurel) — Greater Union Award for best film in the documentary category
- *In Love* (Cassidy) (Jenny Robertson) — Young Cross Animation Award
- *Rock Star* (Charles Sandford) — Southern Mammalian Award
- *Palsade* (Lucretia McKern) — Greater Union Film Distributors prize

## The prizewinners at the 1987 81st Film Festival were:

- Certificate of Merit: *Out Of The Frying Pan* (Leo Berkeley)
- *Kenny's Last Movie*: *Wendy*, *Kevin's Party* (Kerry Woodland), *She's Cheered* (John Harris), *Tennis Court Opera* (Leslie Oliver), *Focus Of Wendy's Father* (NSB Parsons), *Too Young After ...* (Tom Young Glaser) (Anna Karmali)
- Special prize from The Mayor of St Kilda: *Remember Diary* (Ivor Campbell), *Sandra To Slow For* (Mara Brindley)
- Kodak Australia Super 8 prize: *Stratford Of Hilda* (Clara Windford)
- Kodak Australia Cinematography Award: *Tricks Addin for My Little White*, *Seven*
- Illustration Film Prize: *One Wild Weekend With The Lonesome Rastin* (Julie Morley)
- The Langford Cinema Award (Stom Sausage) and his collaborators for *Nature Morte* and *The Crucifix*
- Cinema Film Laboratory Prize: *Spontaneous! (Jung) Acquired*
- City of St Kilda Prize: *Smack And Rock* (Katherine Stone and James March)

## IN TOORONGA FESTIVAL OF AUSTRALIAN FILMS SHORT FILM COMPETITION

Sep. 1-8, 1987.

### DOCUMENTARY ANIMATION

### FICITION/DRAMA EXPERIMENTAL

Films must be at 16 mm sound on film or Super 8 and should not exceed 30 minutes.

- \$750 cash prizes in each category
- Winners screened at Cinema Torowamba (Bend, Carroll & Coy) and broadcast on Television Station DING Channel 11.
- Special Awards, Carroll & Coy award for Best Short Film (15mm), Information and Entry Forms obtainable from Central of Powers Office, 1000 Hall P.O. Box 3275, Torowamba, 2448, 4599 (australian "Short Film Competition"), Telephone (08) 55 4877.



David (left) and Alan

## HONG KONG

### Gangsters, murders and melodrama

CINEMA HAD been one of Hong Kong's most popular entertainments, yet the commercial theaters there have little time for art, fringe — or even non-American foreign films. But that kind of film fare, local movie buffs went only on the annual Hong Kong International Film Festival, now in its eleventh year. This year's HKIFF, which took place from 10-21 April, featured some 130 full-length films plus a selection of shorts and videos. The paucity of the festival's popularity is in the box office: this year the festival sold about 50,000 tickets.

The Australian entries consisted of *The Pango Devils*, *Two Friends* and shorts by Jane Campion. Special sections of the festival included a tribute to Soviet filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky, who died last year, and a retrospective of the films of Milos Forman. A retrospective of Hong Kong Cantonese opera films, including the classic *Headline Queen* series, confirmed Hong Kong's traditional reputation of providing world cinema with some of its most lachrymose.

Hong Kong's own entries at the festival were, on the whole, a bloody lot: gangsters, murder and melodrama dominated the screen. Michael Hui's *Inspector Chor* (later provided westerners comic relief fans of Allen Fong, the territory's top 'art' director *Farther And So* and *At Yung*), meanwhile, failed to see his third feature just like *The Weather*. Though the film

received mixed reviews, at the stark annual Hong Kong Film Awards, timed to coincide with the (noncompetitive) festival, *Pong* was named Best Director for his effort. Visitors to the festival from abroad numbered close to 70 this year. They included critics, filmmakers, distributors, arguments from other festivals and journalists from Europe, North America and parts of Asia, attending from Australia were film critic David Stratton and Andrew Pike of *Bonus Film*.

Many of the visitors are attracted by the HKIFF's reputation as a premiere showcase for Asian cinema. This year, however, the Asian section was unusually anemic. Although there was a strong representation from Japan, there was nothing at all from South Korea, Indonesia, Sri Lanka or Thailand. From the Philippines came only a collection of independent shorts by Raymond

Red from Malaysia, one feature film.

China had a number of entries. *The One And The Eight*, a World War II story about a Communist Party member and right-hand crime criminals, was actually made in 1985. As the subject of intense controversy in China, however, it had been shown in more than 70 places to meet the demands of China's cultural commissars and previously had been banned from export. The HKIFF screening represented its foreign debut, albeit in its censored version. Also showing was China's first on-screen black comedy, *The Black Cannon Incident*, and its somewhat patchy sequel, *The Stand In* (China's first satirical comedy film). *The Big Parade*, the second film by the director of *Yellow Earth*, Chen Kaige, sought to reexamine the relationship of the individual and the collective within the context of preparations for a major military parade, partly due to

classics based on the director by officials, it ends up looking uncomfortably like a paragon to *Tropics*.

Several co-weddings. Allen Lee frankly comments that generally, "that year seems to have been a bad one for Asian filmmakers." The festival programmers, he explained, chose not to select works they didn't believe to be of high stand of merit if it meant having fewer Asian films overall.

One noteworthy aspect of the Asian section this year, however, was the inclusion of two Taiwan films. Hsu Hsiao-hsien's *Dust In The Wind* and Edward Yang's *The Yersin*. Considering the widely recognized achievement of Taiwan cinema over the last few years, it may seem surprising that this was the first year the HKIFF has featured films from Taiwan. Picking a representative have long stood in ways more in its culture, so black showings of Taiwan films in film festivals around the world in Hong Kong they have had the advantage of what would appear to be an almost gossamer level of government censure. *The Yersin*, who have agreed to hand back sovereignty over the territory to China in 1997, place a high value on smooth relations with the communists.

This year, however, festival organizers and supporters joined the ranks of the locally published *Free Speech* in a head-on battle for the right of the HKIFF to screen Taiwan films. Ironically, their success came just as a report in the *Aston* that *James* journal created a huge scandal by revealing that the Hong Kong government has for years been banning (mostly Taiwan) films from commercial screenings on political grounds which, in fact, is simply illegal.

Lucinda Jarvis



The Stand in



Dust in the Wind

# FROM MOSCOW TO MELBOURNE



Vladimir Osibov shot six feature films in the Soviet Union before he came to Australia. PETER LAWRENCE and SONIA LEBER talk to him about his move from Moscow to Melbourne.

"I worked on *Aiya's Happiness* (1966) as second unit cameraman. It was about a village, collective farming, and was directed by Konchalovsky (later to make *Moscow's Love* and *Runaway Train* in the West). Initially it was hailed as an achievement, to be sent to Venice as a Soviet entry. The local Party boss (first secretary of the Gorky Regional Communist Party Committee), saw the film and was furious. That idiot from Gorky (prognatal boomers being very powerful people), was infuriated by a scene where some people were sitting talking in a pub and drinking beer. 'Never. What sort of example are you showing people?' he said. That was enough for the film to be banned. It was sold on the shelf 15 years later when I left Russia."

Vladimir Osibov migrated to Australia from Russia in 1981, at a point where his career seemed to be flourishing. He had been director of photography on six features, and had had many successes in television. What some might then see as an unwise career move has been a boon to the Melbourne independent film scene, where Osibov has worked on and off since his arrival.

Osibov suffers from the dilemma experienced by European migrants in the fifties and sixties — non-recognition of professional skills. When he arrived in 1981, none of his work was available to showreel. Despite this, he began working as a stills photographer on a number of features and miniseries, including *Women Of The Sun*, *Wastefront*, *Kamperno*, *Strikebound* and *To Market, To Market*.

For Osibov, the transition to working in Australia has presented few problems yet the most notable variation is the decidedly different pace of film production. In Russia, a DCP's involvement can mean spending up to two years working on one project; in Australia, the pace is very rapid. But he greets the change with enthusiasm: "When they start a production in Russia, the DCP begins involvement at the second stage of the second draft of the script. Location surveys are all done by the DCP, director and art director. Sometimes

this just takes a month. Four or five people work on the script, including the DOP. Shooting takes an average four to five months, sometimes longer, then afterwards the DOP will work on the project up to release point. In Australia the major difference is the speed of work, the tempo. For me it's inspiring, and I think the results are better."

Osharov's involvement in film came in an unusual way and at an early age. His mother taught English and French at Moscow Film School, a job which included translating films for the students. This was done in quiet, sitting in the cinema and providing instant translations as the films ran. Subtitling in Russian would have been too expensive.

Osharov's first experiences of the cinema took place at these screenings. Too young to be left at home, he would accompany his mother to work. When asked if these experiences provided the catalyst for his involvement in the industry, he says: "You have to imagine, in those days just after Stalin's death when everything was restricted, aspects of Western culture like jazz, like abstract painting, were just seeping through. The students at the film school seemed more advanced than the public, they wore more fashionable clothes, their lifestyles were more relaxed. I liked the people, the atmosphere. I was drawn to that first of all."

Film school meant specialising from the outset — every student only be gained by proof of knowledge of one's area. For Osharov, this meant sharpening his photographic skills in preparation for the ensuing entrance exam, where he would be asked upon to light a few scenes. "You have to know what you want to be and make a choice before you apply. For the cameraman, already you have to be a professional photographer before they let you off the scene and submit your films. If you're not good, they won't let you start."

"The course takes four years. When I was at film school, production was gradually increasing, but the situation wasn't good. However, there is no unemployment in Russia and after graduation you start work as a camera assistant, then camera operator. You go through all these stages to end up as a DOP, but there are no guarantees."

From our position in the West, it is easy to conjure up notions of a strict course where serious study covered only those films displaying correct ideology, and the works of the great early Russian filmmakers. But it seems that Russia's political and economic isolation did not, in certain circles, necessarily entail cultural isolation.

As far as the general public was

concerned, screenings were limited and many overseas films were not shown. However, the students at Moscow Film School had access to films from all over the world.

"The biggest cinematheque in the world is near Moscow, where they store probably a million films," says Osharov. "They don't buy films or distribution rights. Russian films are exchanged for others from European or American film libraries. Sometimes a film is brought to a festival and they make a black and white copy. I think I first saw Osharov in black and white. But you don't need. It's still good to see what's being done

concerning works in film, and while they are often heavily political, their irrelevance and theoretical insight mean that they are keenly studied in countries of very different political positions. The film industry has managed to survive Russia's turbulent history, economic isolation, and more specifically, stylistic interference, particularly under the reign of Stalin.

For the film industry, a policy of self-sufficiency meant that the manufacture of camera and lighting equipment had to be of a standard comparable to the West, and readily available. But there were still problems, most notably with film stock.

In Russia, stock is produced locally or imported from East Germany, but it does not match the quality of what is available in the West. There are problems with colour, and because film speeds are so slow shooting cannot take place in low light. When Osharov shot his first colour feature in 1988, the stock was rated at 20 ASA. The small amounts of Kodak stock imported from the West are treated like gold, according to Osharov. "The film industry, centralised in Moscow, would have a standard stock allowance for each film of about 8 to 1. This was increased for films with children and animals. If you tried hard and used your connections, they could give you 5000 metres of Kodak and 20,000 metres of Russian stock."

"Some directors such as Resnais had had certain connections. He was one person who could go to the Politburo, tell them his needs for a project, and generally get what he wanted. Once I was shooting a film which starred a famous Russian ballerina. She was in her mid-fifties and had to play a 16-year-old. We told her, 'If you get us the Kodak, we'll make you look a million dollars.' So she went off somewhere and got as enough Kodak stock for the whole movie. It was easy for her, it happened just like that."

"Another privileged director was Tarkovsky, because Russia could hold him up to the world. He could always get the right camera, lenses, film stock. When *Solaris* started and they had shot about two-thirds of the film, Tarkovsky realised that it was wrong and found scapegoats. Production stopped and they sacked the cameraman and art director. But this had nothing to do with the cinematography. A few months earlier, at the opening night of his previous film, *The Mirror*, Tarkovsky had told a packed audience that he considered his cinematographer George Kosberg to be number one in Russia. Disregarding the hour's sorcery of *Solaris* already shot, Tarkovsky fired another cameraman and became art director himself. New locations were



Vladimir Osharov in Moscow (left) in Melbourne (right)

around the world because these films are not shown to the public."

"When it comes to making our own projects, ideological considerations were of considerable importance, but in terms of studying film history we could look at any available film from around the world. One of the highlights of the pre-production period was watching films from the West. A small group — director, cameraman and art director — might give the cinematheque a list of 10 or 15 films they wanted to see. We were drawing on all the modern trends in world cinema in order to determine the visual style."

"The Russians made many Soviet Westerns, using the aesthetic side of American Westerns and apogees Westerns — the films of John Ford, Sergio Leone and others. I call them Westerns, but they deal with different subjects, like the fight between the Red Army and terrorists. Other directors prefer to analyse other masters. In the works of Nikita Mikhalkov you can clearly trace influences of Bertolucci and Kurosawa."

Russia is renowned for some



BACK IN THE USSR: student Gubarev on motion picture set (and below)

found, he rewrote the script and using the same actors, they started shooting it again from scratch."

The case of *Strider* could be seen as a self-indulgent use of funds. But filmmaking is heavily subsidized because it is seen as an important cultural activity. According to Gubarev, "The trouble with the feature film industry is that they launch a project, they approve a script, and by the time the film is finished the political situation might have changed. And those people whose signatures are everywhere might end up giving you a third category for the finished product — which was made in accordance with the script.

"This system of ratings and categories holds for each finished movie. (Ratings are decided by a special Board within the State Film Commission.) In any case, if a film is made which isn't considered to be 100 per cent ideologically pure, you would expect that if anyone had to be penalized it would be the director and the scriptwriter. But in fact the whole crew is penalized, including the technicians, gaffers, make-up people — everyone. The camera operator, sound recorder and art director are entitled to jump over bonuses depending on what category the film rates, so they get smaller bonuses.



"The first colour film I made got a third category and a very small distribution. I think it was one of my best films in all respects, but not many people saw it. We were all really proud of it, but in financial terms it was a disaster. This type of thing happened to me several times.

According to Gubarev, there are very few DOPs who can rightfully claim a personal style, rather he sees the question of style as the directors' domain. "As a DOP I didn't have any personal style. Probably the way I go in to be different always. It depends on the script. I find when I start to shoot a film the first preference is to imitate the available light, what you get normally. Sometimes this is reactive. You have to change according to the story. This doesn't mean it has to become very obviously artificial. Lighting can be dictated by mood or you might be carried away by natural light, but then find it doesn't work for all the angles required. You have to control yourself..."

"With every film you make discoveries. You learn on a case to case basis. Some scenes are self-evident, others aren't. Sometimes you use the available light, or on a huge set or second stage you might use 500K of lighting, 30 brute arcs and 100 tungsten lights all operating at once.

"On the big jobs the approach is the same. You just go ahead and do it, make adjustments, switch lights on and off. But there will always be a bit of hesitation."

Gubarev's move to Australia was motivated by an increasing frustration with the staid nature of the Russian film industry. After working for a while as a still photographer on a number of features, he was DOP on several independent films. Three Australian Film Theatre productions (*A Single Life*, *Hangover Together*, *Bonnet Road*), marked the beginning of his chance to showcase his work in Australia. In the meantime, he has been content to lead his experience to low-budget independent films, commercials and Swinburne productions.

His most recent work has been as DOP on *Feastable*. This APC-funded production was, according to Gubarev, unique and important. His heavy experience allowed him the opportunity to work with low key, direct light, and move away from the constraints of naturalism.

As yet, Gubarev has not been offered a feature film in this country. "However, I prefer living with uncertainties. I had got to a stage in Russia where I could see that my whole life ahead was absolutely fixed. I already knew what work I would have done for the next 40 years, even the way they would bury me."

A FILM BY  
**FRANCIS VEBER**

**GERARD  
DEPARDIEU**

**PIERRE  
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# LES FUGITIFS

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## AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

**CLOSING DATE FOR PRODUCTION FUNDING APPLICATIONS JULY 1987**

### CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT FUND

The aim of the CDF is to encourage development and experimentation in film and video by supporting the production of highly creative works and the development of talented film and video makers. Funds are now available for outstanding projects, including documentary, drama, animation and experimental work, at any stage of realisation.

### ELIGIBILITY

Candidates need to be Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia. Equality of opportunity is Australian Film Commission policy, and applications are invited from persons regardless of sex, race, ethnic background or physical impairment.

### GUIDELINES

To obtain copies contact a Project Officer of the Creative Development Fund:

in Sydney on (02) 932 7533 or toll free (080) 22 9815,  
or write to:  
CPO Box 2044  
SYDNEY, NSW 2001,

and in Melbourne call (03) 490 5144,  
or write to:  
183 Bank Street  
SOUTH MELBOURNE, VIC 3204

### TO APPLY

Forward the following to the Creative Development Fund, AFC by 4 p.m. on Friday, 17 July, 1987:

- 1) Final draft dialogue script (not shooting script), OR
- 2) Fully developed treatment for documentaries and other projects where a script is inappropriate, AND/OR
- 3) Sequence of storyboard for animation or where applicable, AND
- 4) Curriculum vitae of applicant or in the case of an applicant who is not the director, the curriculum vitae of the director.

Applicants whose projects fit the guidelines and are considered ready for production will be invited to complete application and budget forms.

**CLOSING DATE — FRIDAY, 17 JULY 1987**

# This man's Insatiable



David Fleming



John Concannon

David Chesworth is a composer and musician who works in the fields of performance, video and film. KATHY BAIL spoke to him about his recent video *Insatiable* and the problems of bringing opera to the screen.

For composer and filmmaker David Chesworth, music is a way of ordering noise, of selectively appropriating one element over another. It is a political process, operating most blatantly in the music video format that now dominates our screens. Old musical forms and stylistic ideas are repackaged in three-minute grabs; what MTV plays as "new" is only new in the context of the other videos being shown. "It is total nostalgia," says Chesworth, "museum music."

These ideas are rigorously explored in his 29-minute video, *Insatiable*. Subtitled an "operatic drama for four voices", it draws on musical, rather than literary, traditions, treats the video clip artists at their own game, and ties itself into that problematic strand of cinema history, filmed opera.

Extended music video or music theatre pieces have enormous scope, suggests Chesworth, and yet the form is rarely used: "Music has to exist within a context, it's not only what you hear but what you see . . . I can think of so many ways of combining visual and musical things, more than I can think of things in a purely musical way." *Insatiable* demonstrates his strong sense of how to exploit and combine different mediums and avoid being trapped by them.

The main setting of *Insatiable* is an old theatre stage; a museum of worn instruments, costumes and theatrical monoliths. Four people, each signifying a different performance style, arrive for an audience. There is occasional spoken dialogue, but mostly singing; opera, popular song, choral and religious music. The songs show that each character has been designated a particular role; innocent and possibly forever unfold.

The music, rather than the actors' stories, is the organising factor. "It's

the only complete part of the film," says Chesworth. "It has a beginning, a middle and an end. The last song over the credits means the musical themes that have run through the work. So that completes it, whereas the four characters' stories are incomplete. They just go off but you're not sure where they are going to go!"

"I wrote the music and the words at the same time. I wanted to use themes that were historical and so I used some Gregorian chant and an operatic type theme and then distorted them slightly. For example, I took the first few phrases of the chant and repeated it or looped it; the music was just like this process, constantly giving rise to new forms."

"There's a displacement, and that happens in just about every song. That is, the phrase length of the text is out of place with the length of the music; the music is always shifting as a result of the overlapping of the different lengths — a phasing effect. So what we have is these small themes which I lifted out of older musical themes, and these are made to just churn around and keep repeating themselves. In a way, the piece is about a kind of redundancy. Because we're playing with a whole lot of old forms, I wanted to illustrate the fact that these four people are also locked into these redundant positions."

Given his track record as a composer and musician (a member of the experimental groups, Tch-Tch-Tch and London Airport, as well as solo performances and records), Chesworth initially applied to the Music Board of the Australia Council for funding. When they rejected the proposal, he approached the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission. "They responded because it was something different for them," he explains.



David Chasworth

"The music scene is more institutionalized. The music boies see performance cases in terms of the institutions that perform it. Film works on the idea that there is a director who exercises control (of course the producer breathes down your neck). In music, if I wanted to write something for a group of singers, I would have to approach an existing body, like the Victoria State Opera, but they're not open to ideas like *Invisible*!"

*Invisible* was originally performed live; this wasn't intended to be the final version, but rather part of the process of making the video. While Chasworth enjoys live performance, he feels the audience is limited. "It's a huge investment and the record isn't there. That doesn't appeal to me. I make records, and I like having something which sustains the piece. It's not just 'here's some songs from the stage performance'; you can refind it the way you want to."

An integral part of *Invisible* is the multiplicity of camera angles. Chasworth needed more than the fixed view live theatre allowed. He used the camera to move in closely on the characters' movements. Although the

setting is cluttered, the performance is precise, pared down to the smallest of gestures; sounds and exchanges are reduced to the essential.

Chasworth worked with the same four actors through both stages of the project. They had to learn not to act, he says. "I didn't want them to show emotion when they were singing. There were a few difficulties at first because I wanted them to negate so much of themselves." Not interested in 'film acting', he wanted to use the characters as representations rather than present them as 'real people'. This gives the video its grace and symmetry, and the sense of artifice which allows it to work as an operatic film.

In an article in *Sight & Sound* (vol 36, no 2, Spring 1987), Alan Steinbock examines the difficulties of transferring opera to the screen. He argues that "opera films fail most conspicuously when the director attempts to adapt the theatrical work to what is considered the necessary realism of the cinema . . . The more realistic an opera film is in detail, the more preposterous it seems that the characters should be singing to each other."

*Invisible* convinces because it understands the mood of operatic form and it delights in the artifice and formality. These stylistic qualities bring us right into video territory, an area Chasworth has covered well (*The Metaphysical Factory*, *Indefinite Objects*, *Glorious In Secret*). "Video has a different effect," he says. "I like the texture. It doesn't allow you to be quite as withdrawn into it. In a way, it just makes the viewers more aware that they're watching something that is being constructed in front of them. And that appeals to me, because, in *Invisible*, there is a whole lot of seduction going on in the music, the way they are singing, and the looks and gestures. The whole piece is larger than life; it is totally different from realism. I wanted to retain that."

*Invisible* begins with a wide landscape, a forest at dusk, soft hues of green and golden brown. It simultaneously seduces (the beauty and vibrancy of the scene) and distances (the anxiety expressed in the words, has the scene been 'faked'?).

It is double-ended from beginning to end. Chasworth jokes: "It plays off the whole kind of seduction thing — the title is taken from one of Marilyn Chambers' *Electric Blue* videos — because of the way the music affects you emotionally. But then the audience tries to look for rational reasons in each of the characters' stories." So while the characters are condemned to repetition, the audience is left to complete the story, or left waiting for "an arrival, a return, a promised sign".

*Invisible* was shot by Vladimir Oshtov, interviewed in this issue of *Cinema Papers*, p30.



Oshtov



Ross Cooper acknowledges the initial work done by Andrew Pike in 1978 as Australian Archives in its silent-film script and photographic holdings. But Cooper finds it ironic that it was Andrew Pike — and not Richard Fotheringham — who first found Raymond Longford's script for *The Women of the Year* (1918), together with at least one other major discovery, the script and still photographs for Longford's *The Chorus and The Women* (1917).

Similarly, previous accounts of Fotheringham's discoveries of early 1986 do not mention that the ground covered by Fotheringham had, in fact, been broken three years earlier by Andrew Wright while researching the documentary *Don't Call Me Gals* (1983). After re-tracing Pike's footsteps, Wright moved beyond them to locate a further 80-or-so files, 44 of which contained scripts of the silent and early sound period.

For Wright, the keys to these holdings were the copyright notices from 1907 to 1969, readily available through Dendle Clarkson of the Patents Office, Winton, ACT. These notices are presumably the same ones later found by Fotheringham and described by *Time* as "the key" to a "treasure house of movie-making" via 88,000 artistic copyright applications.

Among the valuable scripts and accounts found by Andrew Wright were the playrights of *The Midnight Wedding*, of which a film version was directed by Raymond Longford in 1913 with Lorna Lyell in the female lead; the script for Longford's *The Making of The Beauty* (1918)<sup>2</sup>; and two early accounts by Pauline McDougall — *The Gentle Love*, written in 1925 but never filmed, and *Three Who Love*, filmed in 1926 with fragments still surviving. These scripts, and their relation to the silent films made by the three McDougall sisters, have been analysed at length by Wright in her book *Andrew Gears*, published in April 1988.<sup>3</sup>

Cooper's attitude to Lorna Lyell's role in Longford's work is puzzling given the evidence that now exists to support the view that history has underestimated Lyell. Cooper refers, for example, to two "Longford-associated scripts"<sup>4</sup> and the "full script of at least two Longford-Lyell films, one of which no longer exists: *The Danish Girl*<sup>5</sup> and *The Women of the Year*" before concluding on a somewhat sweeping footnote: "Now we can also have the luxury of examining scripts written by Longford and Lyell in the mid-teenies that were never made into films, like *Don't Call Me Gals* and *Rebecca Gears* it can only be assumed that Cooper began the myth-making at her feet. But in evoking Cooper exaggerates Wright's view of Lyell, and similarly that of Richard Fotheringham, as reported by *Time*: "The film industry

# KELLY: HIT

IN THE MARCH 1987 ISSUE OF CINEMA PAPERS, RICHARD FOTHERINGHAM PUT FORWARD AN INTRIGUING SUGGESTION ABOUT THE ROLE OF RAYMOND LONGFORD IN THE MAKING OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST FEATURE, THE STORY OF THE KELLY GANG, AND ROSS COOPER DESCRIBED



the reputation of partner Lorna Lyell, who is shown to have co-written and directed many of the Longford films. "Could it be that Cooper has too hastily come to his conclusion without paying sufficient attention to the material held by Australian Archives?"

As we have seen, the scenario for *The Women of the Year* was found in 1978 by Andrew Pike, and *Don't Call Me Gals* was located by Andrew Wright in 1983. But the latter is not the unaltered script to which Cooper refers, but an early draft of *Pier Venus's Silence*, which was filmed by Longford-Lyell Productions in 1925 and released the following year.<sup>6</sup> Both scenarios are historically important, but so no one to date has denied Longford's authorship of *The Women of the Year*, and Cooper acknowledges the co-authorship of Longford and Lyell on *Don't Call Me Gals*, it

is difficult to accept now how he can cite this material "to put to rest the myth... that Lorna Lyell did all the work on Longford's films".

## THE TAIT FAMILY & SAM CREW

Richard Fotheringham notes that little exists to support the Tait family's claim that "J. & N. Tait" (particularly Charles and John Tait) were involved in *The Story of the Kelly Gang* other than they "inspired the film during an East Melbourne screening" and "some subsequent scenes" were under their direction. But information exists to show that the Tait were much more fully involved in the production and exhibition of the film than Fotheringham would have us believe.

If publicity for the initial Melbourne, Sydney and New Zealand screenings are any indication, the Tait were intensively

The exceptionally well kept film notes of Cooper in a file under copyright notice.



CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT, Francis' Foster location

# OR MYTH

## THE IRON MASK



SOME OF THE ARCHIVAL DISCOVERIES THAT HAVE ILLUMINATED THE EARLY HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN FILM. GRAHAM SHIRLEY AND ANDREE WRIGHT TAKE UP SOME OF THEIR POINTS ABOUT DISCOVERY, IDENTITY, AND THE CAREER OF LOTTIE LYELL.

involved in the film's first release. Some of this publicity confirms their identity as producers of *The Story Of The Kelly Gang*. On 10 February, 1907 Sydney's *Sunday Mail* stated: "'The Palace Theatre was crowded in all parts last night when Messrs J. & N. Tait presented their magnificent story [our emphasis] of the Kelly Gang'."

On 4 May, 1907 the *New Zealand Times* reported that Messrs J. and N. Tait would introduce *The Story Of The Kelly Gang* at the Wellington Opera House on Saturday 11th. The *Times* continued: "In order to give a faithful replica of the attempt to wreck a train, a special train had to be engaged from the Victorian Government. Janet Lady Clarke, of Melbourne, in whose possession is the armour worn by Ned Kelly... lent this relic to the Messrs Tait for the purpose of a picture depicting his capture."

One of the students of the Federation's article was to assert that the Tait were not involved in production by

stating: "... whose control did [the actor-manager] Dan Barry have over the making of *The Story Of The Kelly Gang*? His name is not mentioned by any subsequent commentators, unlike for 'Sam Crow', mentioned by Lady Violet Tait in her history of the Tait's, *A Family Of Brothers*, as the assistant director and a former actor in one of the stage productions. Unfortunately her book is based on distant memories rather than a study of the contemporary evidence, and is riddled with errors."

It is conceivable that Violet Tait's book, like any history, contains its share of errors. But to state that it is "riddled" with them without being more specific is to uprise through a minefield. Indeed the Tait family gave consistent evidence over the years of their involvement in the production, and this is supported in detail by Ross Cooper's MA thesis, 'And The Villain Bill Pursued Her', which contains

the most authoritative account of how the film was made.<sup>1</sup>

Instead of looking closely at the Tait family residence, Federationism attacks Violet Tait's book on the grounds that she wrote online without the Kelly Gang assistant director Sam Crow with Dan Barry — or that Crow never existed.

Nevertheless, Sam Crow did exist. In October 1902 he was the subject of a small controversy in the magazine *Argosy*, when one reader claimed that Crow had not appeared in a stage production of *When London Sleeps*. The argument was won by evidence from Jack MacFarlane, director of the St George's Theatre, Barnville: "I was with that old-time manager, Sam Crow, when he played *When London Sleeps* in 1898-99 around the suburbs of Melbourne."

MacFarlane also revealed that Crow had turned his hand to writing, since he had co-written the Maggie Moore stage success *Shook Off* in the early years of the century. Then, in a reference to Crow's involvement in *Kelly Gang* that is as clear as it is confusing, MacFarlane added: "From drama, Sam Crow went into producing the actors, and it is a curious history that his *Kelly Gang*, started in 1906, and completed in 1906, was the first picture produced in Australia."

Could *Kelly Gang* have been Sam Crow's film above everyone else's? Very doubtful — but it appears beyond doubt that Crow's most important contribution had been to suggest to the Tait that the film be made in the first place — a first given credence elsewhere by Ross Cooper, Ian Bennett and Ken Robb.<sup>2</sup>

Writing for *Argosy* on 12 October 1902, Crow made no mention of having been involved in the production of *Kelly Gang*. But he did refer to his work in screening the film on behalf of the Tait — first at the Palace Theatre, Sydney, between 9 and 10 February 1907, then on tour of New South Wales (17 February-22 March) and New Zealand (23 March-6 July). Crow was still touring films for Johnson and Gibson in 1908, and the following year was assistant director on three features directed by W. J. Lincoln for Johnson and Gibson's Australasian and Patheon — *The Death Rattle*, *The Bell* and *Big Ben Whistle*.

Perhaps, as Ian Bennett and Ken Robb have suggested, the Tait were not involved in the "Second edition" of *The Story Of The Kelly Gang* which was made by Johnson and Gibson from their St Kilda studio prior to the W. J. Lincoln films in 1910. In a 1960s memoir, Ray Perry remembered that after he and his brother Cecil had resigned from the Salvation Army's Limerick Department, they were employed by Johnson and Gibson as cameramen on this second edition. Their brief was to shoot new sequences for the original film, and Perry's memoir continued that the extra sequences "were filmed at Blackburn and Mariburn, outside Melbourne, and other scenes in the studio at St Kilda, located at the back of Johnson & Gibson's Chrysan and Bazaar factory."



THE FATAL WEDDING: Longford's 1911 film



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—*Warner Robin Page, The Australian, 1985*

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# MEL GIBSON EQUALS ...

● Mel Gibson may be the finest actor to assume a short-spoken action role since the salad days of Sean Connery.

— *David Chute.*

● The sexiest man alive.

— *People magazine.*

● You can't become someone else. You only have aspects of yourself.

— *Mel Gibson.*

Making Mel Gibson add up everyone who tries it has a different formula for the equation. According to Mark Rydell, who directed him in *The River*: "This guy is a cross between Steve McQueen and Montgomery Clift." For critic Danny Peary, you add *Red Dawn* to Polanski with a banana, and out. He's also been called "better and newer than Newman and Redford" and "more exciting and explosive than Gary Cooper, Henry Fonda and Steve McQueen."

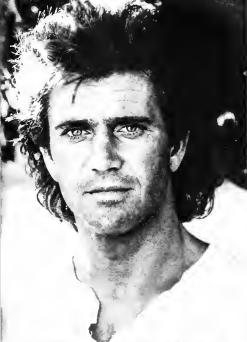
Often it's a sum of contradictions: He "looks very old and not very young." He's "clean shaven, tanned, snappily dressed and athletic." As for why

from the violent blood-matted desperado he portrays in *Mad Max 2*, "Becerra has arrived early but there's no rocky self-assurance about him." Or "women adore him, but he seems to genuinely adore his role as husband and father."

His accent is "a curious mixture of Australian and American.... He looks like women dream but somehow are acceptable to men as men threatening to call America 'home' but continually refers to its people as 'them' and it as 'over there'."

It's a sum that Gibson is not aware of, so yet another contradiction-bound interviewer noted: He's "dearly honest and





THE MEL GAZE: *Mad Max* (top left), *The Bounty* (left), *Lethal Weapon* (right), *Mad Max 2*, *The Year Of Living Dangerously*, *Mr. Cool* (below left) to right



totally determined not to give anything of himself away."

As Gibson himself has said "The less people respect of you as a personality, the more convincing you can be at what you're trying to put across."

There seems to be a need to writing about Gibson to supply something that is perceived to be missing, to fill a vacancy. But in fact, what he is about, despite all the small-scale off-screen experiments with excess that have been faithfully recorded in the press, and the recent pressure of four films in a row — *The Bounty*, *The River*, *Mr. Cool* and *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* — that left him exhausted and burnt out.

It's small physical detail that registers best. In *Mad Max 2*, he spoke only the famous 34 lines — fewer words than the Lord's Prayer. And in *The Year Of Living Dangerously*, his most telling scene was in the last moments of the film, where he walks towards the plane that will take him out of the Philippines; he looks round, like his head back for an instant, and weariness, relief, desire wash over his face, in a far more complicated drawing together of emotion than the close of the ending deserves.

Withholding of information, on and off screen, seems to be his strength. The less he supplies, the more an audience has with. There is no reflection on his ability as an actor extra in so much respect that restraint, compassion so much more inspiring than emotion. In *The River*, one of his best convincing performances, he succumbs, just before he puts Hugh onto the lifeline, as wraps into a raving frenzy, an outpouring of hysteria that breaks his voice and gives us precisely — nothing.

Philippa Hawker

# SHORTS CIRCUIT

Short films often get short shrift in comparison to the attention lavished on features, miniseries, pop clips and commercials. Cinema Papers begins a regular column on shorts: in this issue VIKKI RILEY looks at three works by women filmmakers and MARCUS BREEN writes about a documentary on artist Yoel Berger.

**T**he Invisible Girl, a 45-minute film directed by Joyce Stevenson and Denise Gunz, involves putting a life story on the line and dealing with it in a simple, full-frontal style that is very much concerned with revealing the personal. Financed by a \$44,000 grant from the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission, it concerns the reported slayers of a 17-year-old girl living on a disreputable housing estate in the north west of Melbourne.

The subject is the result of intelligent and compassionate research into the incidence of teenage suicides, particularly among girls, in the context of an increasingly hostile, sexist, drug-contaminated 'youth' social environment. Anita, the main character, was picked from a group of girls at the Camerlengo shopping centre. In real life she shares many of the miseries of her fictional character: loner stories, keeping a diary (much of the film will include a reconstruction of the entries), a devotion of fashion and hair time. The filmmakers are conscious of the tendency for these sorts of issues to drift off hysterically into psychodrama, so that the delivery is low key and avoids the potential sensationalism of the subject matter. No sets were used, and locations were carefully chosen to reveal a domestic environment totally geared towards the non-private: houses built for playing (billiards) and television watching, as well as those pubs that are designed to separate men and intellects. It would be a pity if local television didn't snap the Invisible Girl up immediately, because it's the sort of film that targets a vibrant audience, in the way that its producers did in its attempt to bridge cultural differences.

Melrose is a four-minute Super 8 film, funded by the Filmworks. Ann-Marie Crawford. Her output is so intensely involved with film cinema as it is with making films. It is an approach to cinema which points the way to a cinema absorbed in the subjective and the lyrical, becomes expressed in the silent, fleeting gestures of the self and the corresponding invented outside world. Melrose is very much about the face of the self. It is made up of a collage of moments: a seemingly predetermined montage of places, faces, an angel in the cemetery glimpsed briefly from a car window, the interiors on the Botanic Gardens. She says she shot 'anything that attracted my attention', but every image is loaded with a personal investment in whatever becomes clear and true, in a sense of redemption.

In many ways Melrose echoes a sensibility of place and circumstance along the line of Godard's Two Or Three Things. Melrose: the city, the girl, the feminine, a song, an ode to personal ideology which suffers at every intrusion of the private, even memory. It does a great job of making Melbourne look like a foreign city, yet all the recognizable landmarks are those issues are transparent of commuting playgrounds, the foreign phrases painted on the Unemployed Workers' Union building in Fitzroy



The Invisible Girl

and is for a mythology of a past or a struggle that consistently goes unshared. Amidst this is some old Australian newsreel footage of a fully unveiled on a pavement during the First Resistance in 1945. It could well be, in the film's terms, a Melbourne street because of the cyclical patterns evoked in the sense of renewal and failure of anticipation, cold, resigned eyes at movie heroines playing at romance, anonymous souls endlessly searching locations, ways out. Loss is an important theme in this film, evident in the choice of soundtrack, a most odd American chair-cum-couch song by Father Lombardo.

Where the film sits in relation to a feature or another Super 8 film is a problem, as Crawford declares, she makes films for no state and no effect. But Melrose is obviously looking on something more than a compensatory idea of a 'process' for 'making'.

**I**nteriors is an 18-minute video directed and produced by Marie Hay and funded by a CIP grant to the Women's Film Unit. It's one of the countless videos made in Australia that end up as white elephants because of the large callousness about the medium which exists in the country.

Thus it tries despite the fact that half the population own or hire VCRs, and that music videos are a television staple. Interiors would probably not be included in any program of video on concerned with 'radical practice', which generally means classes with technology, production standards (only watched by TV) and the incorporation of the worst aspects of performance art.

Interiors has no production values except its own, bad editing, blurring and sometimes uncomfortable sound, or perhaps for coloured films and a cast of ridiculous masked 'compers', like their counterparts in World Championship Wrestling. It does more than an



Painting the Town

academic critique of television, as it cranks itself up to the max. Spangled up, high pitched voices blurt out phrases like 'Pier is the real weapon'. 'If you build a girl you should live in one', 'All problems have to stay at home. Sorry, that's the way it is'. This is interspersed with sampling of ads, the space shuttle disaster and excerpts from American news transmission, but not in any random fashion, content and information are the crucial concerns of Interiors.

It uses sampling to create real impact, something that has been important in the movie scene, but is yet to cross over to video in a big way. Interiors does a good deal to sort out the dilemmas of the industry, and comes complete with 'the message', monitors and tape decks on screen with the host, who ends up just about every notion of multi-media performance art, as well as giving the productive a quality of homo-made humanism.

V R

**S**ocial history is not always considered to be an essential aspect of artistic or filmic practice, but *Painting the Town*, a documentary about art in Australia, is very much a social history.

It is a film about Yoel Berger and 'the angry decade of Australian art' between 1937 and 1942 Yoel Berger sought refuge in Melbourne from the horrors of fascist extermination of Jews.

Together with other painters, such as Noel Coward, Albert Tucker, Jim Wigley and George Juke, as well as writers like Judith Waters, Yoel Berger brought the well advanced painting skills and social goals of Europe to an Australia overwhelmed by the narrow minded respectability of the seemingly all powerful Robert Gordon Menzies.

*Painting the Town* explores how Jews like Berger brought a new depth to Australian social and cultural life. As social history the film does its task very well, referring to the groundswells created by jazz, communists, Hitler, the depression, the treatment of Aborigines and Melbourne itself.

It also takes a refreshing approach to film, not expecting an audience to be moved in their appreciation of art and history. Berger is humorous and self-deprecating, describing himself as a mediocre painter.

Indeed, his work is not technically brilliant, his ideas have never set the world on fire, but his life is a testimony to the generations of Jews who have been committed to describing the human condition in a world where change happens too slowly.

Director Trevor Graham has made a major contribution to both Australian film and Australian social history, by telling the story of a man who was one of a number of 'hulkeys', who put paint on based.

By referring to and including interviews with painters like Jim Wigley and Albert Tucker, the film paints a canvas of an important era in Australian history.

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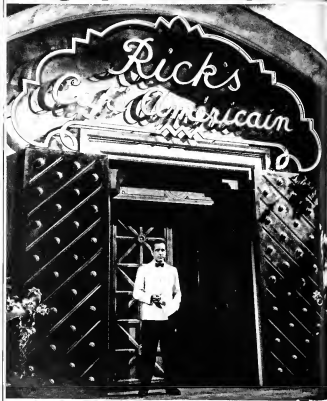
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# NOSTALGIA



longing for what was, what might have been, what never actually was. *Cinema Papers* looks back at the career of Dennis Hopper, an elusive icon who has reflected and defined a succession of eras; at the nostalgia industry; at the way television has imagined the artist. And there's a trivia quiz to bedevil the most backward-looking reader, with the chance to win hundreds of dollars worth of nostalgia.

**T**he past, which was always obscure and could never belong to us, is now gone. But this is not to say it disappears.

It is replaced by a modern past imagined and fixed with a scale, detail and coherence never before contemplated.

This new past is the popular techno-memory of cinema and television, blurring old distinctions between fact and fantasy. It seems to be more informative, more complete, more convenient, more poignant, longer lasting and more real than the old past.

The past today is produced and preserved with a tenacity and determination that borders on the hysterical. It has given birth to a new temporal locus we call nostalgia.

Nostalgia is not watching an old movie. It is not even watching something for the fourth (or tenth) time. It is the search for pleasure in a more perfect past. It is when the 'do you remember?' seems larger than the current pull of the narrative.

It is on this hazy borderline, when memory grows heavier than the present, and images of the past outnumber those which permeate the future, that a threshold is crossed.

At this moment, a program comes to be a boring old rerun and becomes instead one of those 'golden years' of television. Nostalgia is the foregrounding of the pleasure of forgetting — the re-animation of traces of a past we now remember forgetting.

Nostalgia speaks to a past of innocence, naivety and purity. It is a modern voice, both tone and style, with far wider horizons than television, video and cinema. It seeps everywhere, into all corners of culture — drama, fashion, architecture, romance. Nostalgia is the new fetish of an old obsession.

But nostalgia is not simply an ideal and selective memory. It also forges a different relationship of the present to the past.

Memory is creative. In its present, the past lives and actively determines current experience with an unforeseeable productivity.

Nostalgia has the fragrance of death. It is the product of technical dislocation: From a present in which we now live at home to a future which has already been spent and consumed, nostalgia is the funeral elegy of the time that is lost. The nostalgic past can entertain or seduce, but it cannot teach us.

Television is the perfect medium for nostalgia. It exists at the intersection of viewer and society, conferring great personal intimacy with high cultural visibility, condensing and holding diverse fragments of disparate pasts into its endlessly updated present.

Television takes all kinds of histories and works them into television history — a nostalgic world of television programs — which then becomes the referent for other constructions of the past.

Television has quickly developed its own memory forms which function as a metronome in a society which has replaced the seasons with refuge periods. Nostalgia is the name of this memory, a secular temporality transmitted by a narrative clock of seeing. But in consciously disavowing past and present we stand condemned to repeat and repeat and repeat.

Scott McCloud

My fiction has its root in nostalgia. And maybe it will qualify for the tinniest hint of suffering because of that bourgeois form of misery — melancholy. I've always had this sort of 'contemplative melancholy.' There is something in every moment, even each good moment. As a child I used to get a pleasurable kind of sadness sitting in a boat with my father, reading to bed with my mother, because I knew, even as they were happening, that these moments wouldn't last.

I used to think that was the cost of my happy memories, that I'd be sadder as a moment. I guess that's nostalgia as anticipation. I was so happy I was miserable.

In a way, I think that nostalgia is almost a place on its own. Like grief or bitterness, it marks every landscape in its own colour, so that no matter where I'm sitting or working, everything happens in the region of nostalgia.

A place means more to you when you leave it and learn it filtered and intensified for you by memory. Though, if you're like me and you're anticipating what it will feel like to be past the present moment almost as soon as you enter it, there's plenty of filtering and intensifying going on anyway.

Tim Winton, *The Australian Literary Quarterly*, 2-3 June 1992

I think that in order to transform a work, into a cult object one must be able to break, dislocate, exchange it so that one can remember only parts of it, fragments of their original relationship with the whole. In the case of a book one can underline it, as to speak, physically, reducing it to a series of excerpts. A movie, on the contrary, must be already unshakable, solidly, unchanged in itself. A perfect movie, since it cannot be revised every time we want, from the point we choose, as happened with a book, remains in our memory as a whole, in the form of a constant idea of emotion — only an unchanged movie survives as a dislocated series of images, of peaks, of varied postures. It should display not one central idea but many. It should not reveal a coherent philosophy of composition. It must live on, and because of, its glorious incoherence.

What are the requirements for transforming a book or a movie into a cult object? The work must be loved, obviously, but that is not enough. It must provide a completely furnished world so that we fans can quote characters and episodes as if they were part of the fan's private sectarian world, a world about which one can make up games and play trivia games so that the objects of the cult recognize through each other a shared expertise.

Underline Kim, 'Combination: Clio Morin and Interstitial College in Francis in Hyperreality Spaces' — Translated from the Italian by William Weaver (Penguin, 1997).

How has popular culture portrayed art and artists? ROBERT ROONEY takes a fond look back at *Leave It To Heaven, Hatman, Mr Ed* and *Bikini Beach*.

# Portrait of the as a TV char

**I**f Beaver hadn't been playing Pinetop in the attic and found his father's old sketchbook, we would not have known that Ward Chivers was "quite an artist when he was at school".

As June told Beaver when he showed her Ward's sketches of the ocean, mountains and an old aeroplane with four wings like they used to have in the olden days, "He did all these cute cartoons for the school yearbook. He could have been a commercial artist. He was actually very good".

Beaver was surprised. "A guy doesn't think his father can do anything except go to work, come back and stuff like that," he said. Later, in this vintage episode of *Leave It To Beaver*, he finds a way of "being dad being an artist", when he volunteers to do a poster of Paul Harvey in a classroom project.

His brother Wally is not impressed. He knows it's going to be a mess. "They've got monkeys in the zoo who can paint better than you," he says. Beaver perseveres and wins the first prize because he was not helped by his father. Incidentally, his painting is remarkably modern and looks just like a piece of eighties neo-expressionism.

I was not surprised at Ward Chivers' hidden artistic talent, because during the 254 episodes of this great series I took particular notice of the large number of paintings on the walls of the Chivers' Mayfield residence. Most of the pictures consist of little more than the sort of blurred, patchy TV images the American artist Alan McCollum likes to rephotograph, but a few are recognisable as prints of Constable, Monet and the most often seen reproductions of "Parker" and "The Blue Boy", which are by the front door.

I seem to recall that with the arrival of colour TV, such middle-class taste gave way to prints of Picasso (the Blue and Pink periods and others) and Paul Klee in fantastic households of Maxwell Smart and 00, and Samantha and Dean Stevens, while Jeanette and Major Anthony Nelson preferred to decorate their living room with Arabian Nights style kashas.

Paul Beaver is also the subject of one of Mr Ed's several art oriented episodes. Put simply, the plot revolves on the commissioning and execution of a statue of Paul Beaver which is to be unveiled in a public park, and the chaos of Wilbur Post or his stringy neighbour Roger Ashdown as the model. Mr Ed, naturally enough, is to be Beaver's hero.

With the entry of the sculptor Igor Kozak (played in typical fashion by Hans Conrads) we are introduced to a character who confuses to TV

comedy's idea of the artist. When at work, Kozak, like all TV artists, wears a top. Toggly Rembrandt like beard and a smock. Nobody, as far as I know, wears this outfit today except, ageing Melvyn Frank and comedy portraitists.

When the statue is at last unveiled before the Mayor, the distinguished orator announces: "Now the moment you've all been waiting for, my work of genius." The statue, as you're guessed, is a work of "modern art". Offended by the laughter, Kozak shouts: "Silence! This is a masterpiece. It represents the pure essence of Paul Beaver."

In another episode of *Mr Ed*, Roger wants to visit a group of young artists from his recent headline property. Later, one of these "Students", Buzz and Zella, decide to visit the Ashdowns and put their case to Roger in person.

"We'd like to put our little heart-ies like on your property so we can make it like an art colony." When Roger replies with a definite "Take no", Zella recites a poem she has just written about the plight of the young artist - "Rejected, Neglected, Rag Ashdown, who had earlier been given "an original abstract" which looks suspiciously like a Kandinsky, is more sympathetic, but thinks they are a bit young to be so ingenuous. "But we dig being negative."

Rejection, rejection. There's no place in the world for us kids today." Inspired into action by Zella's words, Mr Ed dons the obligatory straw hat and dark glasses and runs away to join the kids as a model.

Another of my favourite *Leave It To Beaver* episodes is one that has unvarnished associations with Pop art, mainly because it reminds me of those photographs of James Rosenquist working on blown-up details of graphic advertising



# artist racter



SCUMBA. Baby Jane Fonda exhibits an interest in painting over all.

boardings. On the way to Whiskey Whitney's place, Beaver and his friend stop to look at a new billboard for "Teaser Soap", in which a "discouraging housewife" holds up a giant bowl of steaming soup.

Whiskey beckons a'd filled with real soap and darts Beaver to climb to the top and find out. Beaver accepts the challenge and falls into the bowl while trying to get a better look inside. He can't get out.

Learning him to be rescued by the fire department, we now turn to the 1968 episode of *Notran* entitled "Pop Goes the Joker". In it, the famous Gotham City artist Oliver Munny, whose "rebirth" at the Park Gallery has just opened, did not consider himself a Pop artist. But when the Joker sprayed paint over all his works, he was delighted by the Pop art effects achieved by this disorderly deed.

Soon after, the Joker wins an art contest sponsored by Baby Jane Fonda, a rich heiress, and decides to open an art school for millionaires. Among the wealthy students is playboy Bruce Wayne. The Joker designs the entire class and held them for ransom. However, his plan is foiled by Robin, the boy wonder, but even he is soon overpowered in a

fight and is tied to a giant mobile with rotating palette knives. The plot thins in part two, "Pop Goes the Joker", but eventually goodness triumphs once and.

The art in "Pop Goes the Joker" is less Pop than "Action painting". Although Life magazine had caricatured Jackson Pollock as "Jack the Dragger" some years before, throwing paint around was still good for a laugh in the 60s. For instance, in the movie *Bakers Beach*, Big Drag (Don Rickles), the dragster club owner and "authority on youth today", also dabbles in a bit of Hollywood-style Abstract Expressionism. When he's not explaining the principles of "automatically" to *Frankie Avon*, he throws paint at black overcoats. Every now and then he is visited by a tall, mysterious figure in a bag hat. "He's a famous art dealer," Drag explains. "How been after my stuff for a long time." The paintings are not for sale. "There's a part of me in those overcoats. It hurts me to see anybody look at them like they might buy them."

After a few more appearances, the mysterious art dealer's identity is revealed during a brawl in which fists and paint are really flying. He is none other than Boris Karloff, who produces an action painting executed by Clyde the monkey as a masterpiece, just in time for the end and the promised murder by Little Steve Wonder.

In *Danger* — *Marmalade At Work*, the only children's TV series I know in which crime consistently pays, Marmalade Atkins upsets her father by painting a masterpiece on a napkin of the "Moon Lane" he is hoping to sell to a wealthy snailish. However, Wendy Woodley Marmalade's tireless social warlock, thanks it is "use and jolly original!" "By this little act of girlish

ventureship, Marmalade is telling us about her frustrated artistic talent." Instead of throwing her out of the window, Wendy suggests that Marmalade should learn with "the greatest genius of all" — Salvador Dali, at the Dali School of Art.

Betsy, who in the opening stages of a certain Spanish surrealist, teaches the young "There'll be no making about in my school, my little 'objet trouvé'." he utters Marmalade. "Right art is all about discipline, obedience and toil. You'll be taught to paint masterpieces by number." She asks him "What about modern art? Gesso with two noses and bare ladies with holes you can see right through." He, of course, also teaches modern art. "There ain't no money in it for me."

Betsy's school is run like a slave camp. The students are chained to one another and forced to paint to the beat of a metronome. They are all wearing bag, floppy hats and paint splattered smocks.

An expressive Marmalade discovers that the students are producing copies of old masters which Betsy flips to greedy visitors to her Masterpiece Market out the back. In the end he is exposed after going modern. He flips, and is carried away while attempting an action painting. "Marmalade's Masterpieces" is an amusing satire on the art world. In most of the shows I have mentioned (and there are lots of others) we are presented with a stereotyped view of art and the artist, which many people still believe. I used to think that nobody laughs at modern art anymore, except in movies and TV comedies. That is, until I attended a *Jail's Art Auction* in Melbourne a few years ago. I can swear you that the roar of laughter at the sight of an original lithograph by Jean Miro were not muted.

The Joker



Remember  
*Rebel Without A Cause*,  
*Cool Hand Luke*, *Easy Rider*,  
*The American Friend*, *Apocalypse Now*,  
*Hoochers* and *Blue Velvet*? ADRIAN MARTIN  
examines the significance of Dennis Hopper,  
whose life and films have played out  
contemporary obsessions for  
four decades.

# DENNIS HOPPER

## OUT OF THE BLUE AND INTO THE BLACK

JOAN MARCUS: "Dennis Hopper, you recently said that in the 1960s, free love and taking drugs created a sort of economic boom. It was like a dream where we all held hands and went and looked for God. Did you ever find God?" DENNIS HOPPER: "Did I ever find God? God found me."

QM: "Is that why you're here now?" DH: "You got it. I was convinced to leave myself out in the desert somewhere dead" and God said, "Come on in. Why don't you come back and see some of your friends. They're dead too."

It is those opening lines of the Interview profile (December 1986), three key aspects of the Mythology that is Dennis Hopper: trouble not only with, in what might at first seem an uneasy co-existence. The movies dream, free love, drugs, hippie spiritualism, the euphoria celebrated in *Easy Rider*. The nightmarish subversion, career comebacks, personal rebirth, the "real good" ethics of *Moonstruck*. And in between, the dark night of the revelation, with its stretch of burn out and near death — the marked vision of *Apocalypse Now*. Once put in order, it's both a logical sequence — the dream, the dream turned sour, the rekindling of hope — and a cultural history. The fascination (and good fortune) of Dennis Hopper lies in his embodiment of this history across his career, and his perpetual re-examination of it in many of his roles.

A proper understanding of any 'star' requires that we take in much more than simply his or her films. As Richard Dyer's brilliant work on Stars and more recently *Stardust* (London) amply demonstrates, a star's image is a conglomerate of all the 'discourses' which publicly circulate around the actor: interviews, posters, rumours, jokes, legends. Indeed, the great ore of Hollywood stardom is characterised by the (often personally damaging) tendency to collapse all facets of the actor's life into the one 'myth' — the real person, the portrayed character, and the larger than life 'persona' all made to reinforce each other (as in the case of Judy Garland). Today, perhaps, some actors are smart enough to avoid that fate Robert De Niro, for instance, only accepts publicity from one screen performance to the next — and they are all deliberately very different characters. Clint Eastwood is more of a 'type' (a complex and sensitive one it must be said) but whatever else there may be of this type in his personal life has always been off-limits. Dennis Hopper, however, confronts us with a murky modern version of Hollywood's Golden Days. He appears to have chosen to live and act out his 'myth' on every level of his life.

Is Dennis Hopper a 'star'? Certainly, he has gravitated towards

projects in which he is either a piece in an epic mosaic (from *Glenn* [1964] to *Apocalypse Now* [1979]), a key supporting actor (*Humble Pie* [1980], *Moonstruck*), or a central figure in films which sight modern identification and involvement across several principal characters (*Heaven* [1985], *Blue Velvet*). He has never been the magnet around which the rest of a film organises itself, and in this sense he is no star (rather than taking this to reflect the opinion that Hopper has "never made it" to the top, I prefer to see his choice of films as exceptionally shrewd and hard). But Hopper is certainly a Myth, and his own Myth to boot; no longer the constructed Actor constructed and haunted by the Studio (as in the best old days), but the modern Artist-Actor, wandering and tortured. His closest contemporary neighbour would be, I guess, Harry Dean Stanton — and the Wendure connection from Hopper (in *The American Friend* [1977] to Stanton in *Paris, Texas* is, I suspect, no accident).

Right now, with *Blue Velvet* and *Hoochers* on show successfully, and with a shelf full of work to come (James Toback's *The Pick Up Artist*, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre II, *Red Red*), the Hopper mythology





has been dusted up and reexamined somewhat. The time has come, it seems, to tell his story. In order to provide an angle on the subject of nostalgia, I want to introduce Hopper's story as one of "discovery" (or rather, slices of cultural history) which are remembered, talked through, reinterpreted, mythologized. It would take another article to discuss the intricacies of Hopper's actual acting — the complex overlay of vocal, gestural and behavioral styles gathered and combined over more than 30 years. Although an appreciation of Hopper at this level will for the most part be missing from the rest of this article, I'd like it known from the outset that I consider him a great actor.

Hopper's significance as an image or myth is very special. His capacity to be virtually an icon is due to two factors. The first, in itself, is the tendency to incorporate known aspects of Hopper's life into his roles — a sometimes cruel incorporation, but one that Hopper obviously relishes in true "psychodrama" style. The oft-reported story of Hopper demanding the role in *Blue Velvet* because he is Frank Booth (and David Lynch's insistence over whether he would thus be able to have lunch with him) is only the culmination of this tendency, developed over many years. As the archetypal "drunker" and "sinister" (Hopper's words) in real life, he has often been cast as the storied wild man, either gloriously rebellious (*Mid Day Morgan*, 1976) or lost and confused (*The American Friend*, *Apocalypse Now*). At the same, dangerous heights of self-reflexivity, Robert Pattinson Hopper as a decorated preacher performer who (when he is not revving) has to be fed his lines from off-screen or propped up with cue cards. Accordingly now that he has kicked his debilitating habits, Hopper chooses either to annihilate

THE MANY HATS OF HOPPER. In *Mid Day*



his sister ego, embrace his dark side (Blaze Volvulv), or to embody the dreams of a man who pulls himself together and goes straight (Hosanna).

Even more central to Hopper's significance is the fact that he has evolved, risen and more, into an eerily symbolic figure. Having been at the helm of one of those cultural events which come to sum up the cultural style of a decade — *Easy Rider* in 1969 — Hopper draws this association into himself and becomes the nation. This as a phenomenon of which Hopper is consciously aware: he told his spectacular photographic collection *Out Of The Movies*: But at only the simplest level is Hopper a purely nostalgic icon, "the nation revisited" (the basis for the time warp joke in which Hopper changes the course of human history in *My Science Project*, 1988). His roles play out a rather different dream, what he truly embodies is the nation in the nightmare, and he knows all the marks of this infernal passage. It is as if, through the vessel of Hopper's body and his persona, the nightmare can talk to the nation, using up both its appeal and its failures.

As a 'retro' phenomenon, Hopper is nostalgic, retrospective rather than the usual retrogression that marks much current nation nostalgia. His general image, and his particular roles, constitute a series of movements or relations between different times, nation styles. His acknowledged kinship with Neil Young (another class cultural reversionist across the same slice of history) is sought in the famous phrase "Out of the blue — and into the black". Hopper is always moving out of something and into something else, his roles regularly start a final descent (Blaze Volvulv) or a stirring redemption (Hosanna). And he is fully aware that if he is 'of' the nation, he is no longer at there.

This action of displacement, this sense of a violent rejection from the

time and place and origin, begins with *Easy Rider* itself, in which the hippie dream ends in death. This Hopper mythology really comes into its own in the nightmare which he begins playing father figures, a symbolic vision of their who helped to give birth to the nation (which is exactly what he does *Out Of The Blue*, directly, and *Runable Path*, more allegorically, is about).

A nation icon, Dennis Hopper is also a mirror icon, and in fascinating ways. Films sometimes cleverly use upon their chosen actors for their emblematic quality — above and beyond the particularities of the individual character being portrayed, the actor stands for an era of cinema, a certain acting style, or a loaded cultural moment. As has been frequently pointed out, *Hosanna's* *The Color Of Money* is 'about', on one level, Old Hollywood (incarnated by Paul Newman) versus New Hollywood (Tom Cruise). Hopper has been used in this emblematic way more than anyone else, a tendency probably most powerfully unguessed by *Winters: The American Friend*, where Hopper's discontented (and doctored) trajectory through the film seems to pose the question of where the American cinema today is going, and of its ambivalent relations with European cinema. But Hopper has been an 'emblematic' actor since at least *Kid Blue* (1973). In his own creative projects, he has been fond of a certain grandiloquent self-reflexivity of this sort, his legendary (but sadly little used) *The Last Movie* plays out emblematic relationships between cinema, society and history. *Out Of The Blue* was reviewed as (to quote Leonard Maltin) the "child of *Easy Rider*". (*The Last Movie* is also important in the Hopper myth because it casts him as the promising young artist who blew it. All on a grand impossible project, in this he pre-dates both *Cinema* with *Winters* & *Blue* and especially *Coppola* with *One*

*From The Heart*, which lends an extra resonance to the affinity between Hopper and Coppola.)

In order to fully understand Hopper's iconic significance, one has to extend the game of decades to include the fifteen. Hopper was of course no actor with and friend to James Dean on both *Rebel Without A Cause* and *Giant*. This association links to Dean and the melodramatic cinema of the fifties is the key to many of Hopper's darker, tougher, more resistant elements — as well as clashing his marked tie with death (when *Interview* asks him about Dean, he curtly replies, "He died September 30"). In terms both of a cultural style and an acting style (the Method Studio, *Blue Movie*), the fifteen stand for an angry and often hysterical energy. It is the contemporary 'retro' attraction to this style that helps fuel the popularity of *Midway* Bourne or Sean Penn, who embody the masculine virtues of "wildness and control" (as a recent celebration of Penn put it), always living at the edge of death or burn out. Marlon Brando is also at the heart of this mythologization of the fifties, thus reinforcing another key emblematic moment out of the meeting of Hopper and Brando in *Apocalypse Now*.

It becomes possible to see Hopper's status as a nation hippie here as a kind of sublimation or repression of all that dark, tortured energy of the fifties. When the twenties hit hard, this anguish and toughness returns to Hopper, preparing for him a place as an emblematic cultural hero (in marked contradiction to his *Easy Rider* co-star Peter Fonda, who simply cleared himself up and promptly faded away). This is, on an emblematic level, what *Blaze Volvulv* is very knowingly about: a film in which both Hopper and Dean Stockwell do duty as children of the fifties who get high in the nation, blow out in the seventies, and emerge as gloriously perverted

Negan (top left), *Out Of The Blue*; Med (top right); *Kid Blue*; *The American Friend* (left to right)





deviates in the slightest (thus all the revised editions of the 'In Dreams' Ray Johnson reference, writing others).

Since the Hopper mythology places particular stress on the way he mediates the screen and the nightmare, a certain popular journalistic discourse finds it easy to cross the adventure from the story (Interview insists on referring to that time as Hopper's 'dropout period' despite his affirmation that 'I worked almost constantly'.) Given Hopper himself plays along with this creature by dating his comeback at 1985, and discovering the first film made in this 'clean' period, *My Science Project*. The elision of virtually 18 years instantaneously wipes out some of Hopper's most important and unusual work. *Belohn*, a variation (like *Cordell's Bad Man*) on the virgin birth story which is one of the key films of the nightmare (see my discussion of it in the July issue of *Phosphores*), and on which Hopper also worked as 'production consultant', *My Science Project*, a wondrous mutant teen sci-fi movie, and Hopper's own *Out Of The Blue*, a not entirely successful but endlessly fascinating film which anticipates

many nightmare trends in the American cinema (Jarmusch, Cox, Wenders). Also unrepresented in this account is how central a figure Hopper really is (in terms of significance, if not screen time) in the two Coppola films.

And more crucially, the adventure, linked with the future, provides the real, secret key to Hopper's image. The personal suffering, madness and exile said to have characterised those years of his career are essential to making sense of what came both before and after. There is something which registers more deeply than the barest celebration of survival and redemption that *Hoodlum* and its publicity campaign promotes — the truth is somewhat more cruel. For a jaded, cynical nightmare, Hopper is a kind of scapegoat. What he suffered and constituted the nightmare's revenge against the dream, stupid states his survival is thus heroic, but he is a broken hero, he will henceforth always be walking the line (in his life as in his films) between 'going straight' and falling back into the abyss.

Denise Hopper as the broken hero can be particularly related to those scenes that I think perhaps has current psychological appeal.

1. *Hopper and Punk*: Hopper embodies the 'dream gone bad' — he is the 'dark side' of the machine. He constitutes a 'return of the repressed', in cultural terms, a foul truth risen to the surface. As such, he fits very well indeed into a certain punk-rock or nihilistic vision of the West and the history. Of course, his involvement with drugs, and his association with an even greater mythological figure William Burroughs (Hopper was set in the late seventies to direct an adaptation of Burroughs' *Junkie*, but he over-researched the subject) secures his place at the helm of a dark nostalgia. David Lynch understands this punk sensibility very well — *Eraserhead* is one of its flagships — and *Mus Volver* is in many respects a film of dark nostalgia, of the deconstruction of cultural icons. It again seems fated, or at least fitting, that Hopper and Lynch should meet on screen.

To his credit, Hopper seems quite aware of punk's deconstruction and has possible place in it. *Out Of The Blue* is one of the first semi-mainstream films to try apologetically to document and understand the punk phenomenon. With unflinching psychodramatic honesty, Hopper



OUT OF THE BLUE: Dennis Hopper, Sharon Farrell, Linda Manz

perhaps the young punk girl (played unforgettably by Linda Manz) as 'born' of the various turn-outs and absences into which his generation wandered. Hopper's intuitive insights here are very close to those of Neil Young in his *Dead Man's Shoes* phase; appropriately, Hopper was great slugs of that attitude as narrated commentary in the film.

**B. Hopper and Masculinity** Dennis Hopper has never born, shall we say, a romantic hero. Indeed, as many of his roles, the question of a woman to sit beside him as some sort of dramatic partner is never even raised. When it is, Hopper is afflicted with violent frustration and impotence (*Blue Velvet*), or is the beneficiary of irremediable relationship difficulties (*Out Of The Skin*). Hopper presents the spectacle of a dark, male masculinity drawn into itself — and it's strange that not until *Blue Velvet* has he expressed homosexuality before an element of his screen psychosis. For the most part, however, Hopper distils the features of heterosexual masculinity. He is more and more 'the father' — but a displaced, diseased father, without wife, family or glory.

Obsessionism is one of the keys to this father. The Hopper myth is one of a Man Obsessed, obsessive worshipping on his twisted days ('I don't think there was a start/end around that could have been had as these days that I didn't have'), obsessive drinking and drug taking throughout the scenarios, and now obsessive work schedules. None of these obsessions leaves any room for a real relation with an 'other', be it woman, man or child. The neurotic undertone to even his most recent 'born again' period has to do with the note of frenzied, solitary fulfillment which rings loud and clear. 'I don't have anything serious in my life at the moment except work. But probably if I analysed it, that's all I've ever really had. ... I'm having a great romance with my sobriety.'

Madness is the other key. Hopper gives us many of his performances at the level of complete derangement, and the uncertainty that 'psychodrama' creates (is he acting? is this real?) is at the very centre of his art. In terms of his masculine stage, Hopper's style creates another ambivalence, another savage play-off of two contradictory 'edges'. He is, on the one hand, always at a certain masculine performative peak, on stage, a rich capitalist, a gang leader. He is the image of blooded, towering power, a total megamachismo; when he yells 'I am ill' in *Reborn*, it's not clear whether he's referring to the good level, or himself. On the other hand, being isolated at the top, with no flesh energy and power to spare, he trends inevitably towards infinite regression, a quality which is caught most eerily in his *Black Widow* scenes, where he hovers over an inconceivable space-age toy and

bursts into a phrenic 'I'm five fucking years old!'

In Hopper we find another figure who balances, precariously, the attributes of 'audacity and control'. The constant, hysterical tension needed to keep these opposites in play defines Hopper's masculinity, always on the edge of self-annihilation. Putting together these qualities of obsessional madness and absence under the rubric of a spectacular masculine madness, we reach another (and) encounter — that of Hopper and James Toback, director of *Hopare*, *Exposed*, and now *The Pick Up Artist*. David Thomson once said of Toback that as you watch his films 'you feel yourself caught up in the imagination of a very intelligent psychotic'. That would be pretty well as a description of Dennis Hopper also — a very intelligent psychotic.

**B. Hopper and Modernism** Even the modern stage who tend, in these performances and roles, towards melodrama and hysteria — *Psycho*, *Do Not*, *Penn* — take the route of the sadly skewed. In the films of De Palma, Polanski or Leone, there is finally more control than audacity at the deepest level of stylistic risk taken. Hopper, however, has wandered further over the line separating cinematic classicism from modernism, and his acting method could be taken as one of the icons of contemporary avant-garde. (In this, Hopper's 'work' — both emblematically in *Rumble Fish* and in terms of his work in *Camera's Fear of the Dragon* and the forthcoming *Reborn* — Schneider collaboration *Hefty* — would be Mickey Rourke.)

Dennis Hopper is the archetypal 'body too much', the bearer of a performance which is in excess of any given scene or film. Hopper's gestures (and what is done with them) are hypnotic and riveting, a spectacle unto themselves. It is these qualities of excess and spectacle which films like *The American Friend* and *Reborn* exploit so well. A model deserted passage from *Reborn* structures an entire scene around Hopper's foregrounded music, wailing head often tilted back but still descending and blotting out the faces of all the other players. Also, that previously mentioned uncertainty over whether Hopper is sometimes acting or not — whether or not he is quite 'in character' at any given moment — chimes in very nicely with many experiments in modern performance.

Hopper's finely tuned 'excess' spreads like a contagion through the films that understand his stylistic significance. A movie like *Blue Velvet* is modernist because everything in it corresponds to a model of distracted obsession, every detail is made to look larger than it naturally might, every surface texture is exaggerated, every intimated 'depth' is rendered both dark and exposed. *Reborn* is less calculated in this way but even more mind-boggling, the film is obsessed

with both visual and aural 'interference', and every frame of it is stamped with strangeness and uncertainty. It takes Dennis Hopper to make the lush art-school modernism of Lynch with the more severe and spontaneous B-movie dramatics of *Reborn*. One caveat with some interest both Hopper's next directed film, *Colors* with Sean Penn and Robert Duvall, and his projected work in rock video ('Phil Spector would like to head up his video department').

Has Dennis Hopper really 'come back' to cinema, straighter Hollywood films? If so, he will always carry into these films, however well good and auspicious they may be, the whiff of something darker and unworked. Hopper is the best of this. It's a completely normal, conservative film Hopper is assimilated into the film as the town drunk and single father who prematurely lets his act down. There's nothing troubling about his place in the film's moral trajectory, nothing particularly ironic or disturbing. He even makes it up with his offspring, for a change.

Not still. In a film which is about ordinary people so effectively getting their act together and integrating themselves into a community. Hopper's performance bespeaks (as it always does) a rather heavy strain. He remains just a little stranger — and a bit funnier — than anybody or anything else surrounding him in *Reborn*. He's funny because he registers as a sort of 'disorienting voice' amidst all the community-minded goings-on. He's the one person who can't quite make it, either into the proceedings or into the film. There's a wonderful moment on the basketball court when all eyes turn to Hopper — sober and well dressed, ready for the game. But you can see he's in such pain, trying to remain straight. And he slides back, too — sitting up in a hospital bed beside a radio for the big game. Having, as always, his hysteria has to be set at some distance from the scene of 'normality'. If only *Reborn* knew that Hopper's situation — mad, straitjacketed, alone — seems more real to some of us than whatever is going on at the court. But *Reborn* probably knows — and that's all that really matters.



# REMEMBER

The host of *The Golden Years Of Television*, DAVID LITKE, reflects on the nostalgia boom, and presents a menu

I've got nothing against nostalgia for television shows of the fifties and sixties — obviously. However, uncritical nostalgia, or love of the past, is only part of the reason for the appeal of some of TV's classics.

For the nostalgia fan the programs are sometimes secondary. The period — its fashions and perceived attitude — is the attraction. Too often, fine scripting, acting and direction play second fiddle to feature hairdos and large cars with fins. This hardening after the fifties and earlier by Baby Boomers shows a desire to return, if not to the month, then at least to the playpen, where life seemed less frenetic, less complex.

The shows bring back memories of penny loafers, homework done in front of *Supernova*, and staying up "late" to watch *77 Sunset Strip* or wifal *Number 12*. The fantasy that permeates these decades as full of "good clean fun" ignores other elements such as the bigotry and the repression of

the time. But lumping all the television product from the fifties and sixties together as examples of the "good old days" prevents the better shows from being seen in a clear light.

As well as the nostalgia parade, there are those observers (and who single out their shows or their actor and offer devotion to it). *Star Trek's* Trekkers are well known. Less publicized but just as keen are the followers of *Lost In Space*, *The Monkees* like, *The Munsters*, and *The Jeffersons*.

Requests from viewers of *The Golden Years Of Television* demonstrate that no show is totally ignored. There are some fans who know, love and beg to see such video gems as *My Mother The Car*, *The Madhouse*, and *Flipper* shows that are derivative, gaudy, badly scripted, and rated by people who should have been stewards.

Observers fans often know all there is to know about a show except the true worth. They have already marked their score card. 10 out of 10.

Once a demand is identified the television industry has always been willing to fill it. Hence, the fans and nostalgia devotees have enjoyed revived series and specials (often a face-saving tactic for unsuccessful pilots).

The re-runners were the most popular. There has been *The Return Of The Mod Squad* (1979), *Flasher Knows Best* (re-run) (1977), *Back To O'Higgins's Island* (1978, 1979), *The Wild Wild West Revived* (1979), *Return To Peyton Place* (1974), *Rollercoaster With The Addams Family* (1979) and the *Return Of Duke Gills*, with another Duke outing planned next year.

The format for the many happy return shows is to bring back as many of the original cast as are alive and willing, to see how the years have affected their characters.

In *Rever's* return, Dad was dead and there was a broken marriage in contrast with Duke Gills returned with a trouble-making son of his own while Maynard had become a jazz entrepreneur.

Sometimes the cast members go through their paces as though the show had never been cancelled, more so in *Peyton Place*. One last case for the *Mod Squad* to tackle, and the Gillses led (marry Ginger who didn't want a bar of it) all setting out on another damn three-hour cruise.

Love for the fans are the "new" versions of old winners. *The Saint* and *The Avengers* returned. *Maverick*

discovered he had a nephew, Ben, in Young Maverick. And before Raymond Star lumbered out to protect Della Street last year, Monte Markheim had a go at portraying Perry Mason. This year the big TV event will be the planned new *Adventures Of Star Trek* that hopes to holdy go where a whole lot of people have gone before.

None of the "New Adventures" of these young series has come near the success of their forebears, perhaps because the shows weren't as well made, or the social conditions had changed since the originals had ended with the TV audience. Probably they failed because they didn't gain a new set of viewers and they didn't please the fans of the originals, or the nostalgia buffs, who no doubt missed the bar-de.

But cutting through the nostalgia here are some of the shows of the fifties and earlier that deserve a salute. *Dragnet*. The mother and father of all cop shows with a distinctive visual and verbal style.

*The Honeymooners*. One set, few props, lots of laughs from expert comic timing.

*Sgt. Bilko*. Master sergeant and master character.

*You Bet Your Life*. *Oxygene* as the quiz master who didn't particularly care for his contestants.



YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS: The Man From U.N.C.L.E.; *Hawaii*; *The Steve Austin Show*; *Dragnet*

# R...

any-tasting nostalgia trivia quiz.

**Peter Gunn:** The mouth of private eye shows with good writing and direction, and music and a hot affair with Mike.

**Maverick:** The only western worth laughing at. I like The only spy series worth laughing at. The Avengers: Fantasy, humour and compelling characters whose background was never explained.

**The Prisoner:** Patrick McGoohan's version of never explaining. More a cross between Lewis Carroll and Kafka than *Dangerman II*. **Till Death Do Us Part:** The world's most important sitcom changed what was considered suitable subject matter for the comedy. **Honolulu:** It showed Aussies preferred rough local shows to slick imported ones.

**Maria Montez:** Commercial television's only successful satire. It shocked nation executives more than executives when it became a hit. **Number 96:** A trifling eight-line scope so on-the-top it went itself up — a harder balancing act of camp than *Baywatch*.

These shows of the fifties and sixties fought the good fight. They deserve no accolade greater than nostalgia.



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## FIFTIES AND SIXTIES TV TRIVIA QUIZ

- How many *Maverick* offspring can you name?
- Which great Anglo-Australian actor made his mark on local TV satire by slipping himself in the face with meat pie?
- Who was King of the Cowboys and who was Queen of the West?
- Who is Barbie Doll's boyfriend?
- Peter Gunn, though a jazz lover, didn't play. Another private eye, Johnny Stearns, did. What instrument did he play?
- What colour is Sir Spack's blood and why?
- What would fall from the sky if you said the secret word in *You See Your Life with Groucho Marx*?
- In *Peacocks*, how much does Lucy's psychiatric help cost?
- What was the address of George Burns and Gracie Allen in their TV show?
- What is the number plate of Lady Penelope's Rolls?
- Who said, "One of these days, Alice, Pow! Right in the kisser!"
- Sleep wonderfully warm with ... whom?
- Why were the names changed in *Dragons*?



Superman film



Number 96

14. If you looked in *Teen King's* handbag what weighty weapon would you find?
15. What physical habit links *Reverend's* *Baroness* to *Johnnie Walker's* *Rebels*?
16. What hole the whole drake through? (Hint: it's an ad)
17. In the television series, where did Clark Kent go to change his clothes ... most of the time?
18. "In point of actual fact" was a popular phrase for which character in *Number 96*?
19. Lieutenant Johnny Hanco was promoted to Captain Adam Gower when he changed shows. What were the two shows?
20. He called his daughters Princess and Kitten and his son, Bud. Who was he and what did he do for a living?
21. Why was Tim O'Hare embarrassed by his uncle?
22. What were the radio call signs of the two cars in *2 Cars*?
23. Cybersnake, Debbie and the Black Guardian troubled whom?
24. What was Robin Hood's full title?
25. Who sometimes have their little spins, even fight like dogs and cats?
26. Miss Frances of 1984 played receptionist to which TV private eyes?
27. Which small Kansas town was situated near Alice's Fort Senter?
28. Who was TV's ghostface with the noose and who was her dog?
29. "Tang and flavoured and sparkling too ..." what is the drink for you?
30. How did Dean Martin get down to the piano area of his act towards the end of each of his shows?

Send your entry to Cinema Papers, 43 Charles Street, Abbotsford 2067. Closing date is 15 August. The first correct entry will win \$250 worth of Classics Collection videos, compilations of CEL. The titles will include *Gone With The Wind*, *Little Women*, *Singin' in The Rain* and *San Francisco*. These movies are available from major department and variety stores around Australia at \$19.95. *Gone With The Wind* retails at \$39.95. Five runners-up will receive copies of *The African Queen* and *South Pacific*, courtesy of CBS Fox. These movies are available at all video outlets. Please state Beta or VHS on your entry. Answers and results will be published in the September issue of Cinema Papers.

# CHARTBUSTER

What are the boffo B.O. performers in Australia and North America? **ROSS LANSSELL** has put together seven lists of 1986 and all-time rental champs.

## THE TOP TEN FILMS IN AUSTRALIA 1986

TITLE	DIRECTOR	GROSS FILM RENTAL IN \$A
1. Crocodile Dundee*	Peter Faiman	18,029,000
2. Out Of Africa	Sydney Pollack	4,307,000
3. The Jewel Of The Nile	Lewis Teague	3,846,000
4. Top Gun	Tommy Lee	3,469,000
5. The Karate Kid, Part 2	John G. Avildsen	1,740,000
6. The Color Purple	Steven Spielberg	1,338,000
7. Alone	James Cameron	1,129,000
8. Police Academy 3: Back In Training	Jerry Zucker	1,058,000
9. A Nipper With A View	John Inery	894,000
10. Bullheads People	Jim Abrahams, David Zucker, Jerry Zucker	877,000

\*Australian production

Crocodile Dundee is probably the phenomenon rent of 1986 but probably also of our time (\$550m box office worldwide as far as its \$10m production budget). The Jewel Of The Nile (no. 3) in the USA Police Academy 3 (no. 8) and A Nipper With A View (no. 9) all did better here than in the US. The latter seven entries also figure on the US list. (Bullheads People, James Cameron's costumed cavewoman "Babe" (1986), originally scored in at no. 12, substituted between Spies Like Us and Hush, not here.)

Data derived from Industry (New York), vol. 327, no. 1, 29 April 1987, pp27 and 124.

## THE ALL TIME TOP 26 AUSTRALIAN FILMS IN AUSTRALIA (To December 1986)

\* Not included for release

TITLE	RELEASE DATE	DIRECTOR	GROSS FILM RENTAL IN \$A
1. Crocodile Dundee	1986	Peter Faiman	18,029,000
2. The Man From Snowy River	1982	George Miller	7,816,000
3. Gallipoli	1981	Peter Weir	4,100,000
4. Mad Max 2	1983	George Miller	3,797,000
5. Phoebe in Love	1983	Simon Wheeler	3,716,000
6. Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome	1985	George Miller	3,258,000
7. Mad Max	1979	George Miller	3,054,000
8. Picnic At Hanging Rock	1976	Peter Weir	1,768,000
9. Alone	1974	Yuri Yezhov	1,700,000
10. Breaker Morant	1980	Bruce Beresford	1,692,000
11. Polarity Movie	1981	Bruce Beresford	1,268,000
12. We Of The Savage Heart	1982	Igor Aspin	1,087,000
13. My Brilliant Career	1979	Colleen Atkinson	1,047,000
14. Storm Boy	1977	Robert Schimke	993,000
15. Corrie	1979	Donald Crombie	911,000
16. They're A Weird Mob	1984	Michael Powell	845,000
17. The Year Of Living Dangerously	1983	Peter Weir	800,000
18. Corridors, No Night From You	1985	Carl Schultz	748,000
19. Battleground	1985	Francis Giannini	718,000
20. The Last Days of Pompeii	1983	John Guager	699,000
21. Aisle 54: The Boyage Home	1974	David Blackwell Robert Campbell	688,000
22. Myra	1985	Markus	628,000
23. Blue Heaven	1981	Phil Smead	600,000
24. Breakfast	1979	Philip Noyce	590,000
25. Sane	1974	Sandy Harbutt	588,000
26. Sandstorm	1983	Gillian Armstrong	544,000

Data derived from Industry (New York), vol. 327, no. 1, 29 April 1987, pp27 and 124.

## THE TOP TEN FILMS IN USA/CANADA 1986

TITLE	DIRECTOR	GROSS FILM RENTAL IN \$US
1. Top Gun	Tommy Lee	52,000,000
2. The Karate Kid, Part 2	John G. Avildsen	50,836,750
3. Crocodile Dundee*	Peter Faiman	51,000,000
4. Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home	Leonard Nimoy	45,800,000
5. Alone	James Cameron	43,000,000
6. The Color Purple (releasing 1986) (not)	Steven Spielberg	41,800,000
7. Back To School	Alan Metter	40,218,000
8. The Shining Child	Michael Pacifici	38,000,000
9. Bullheads People	Jim Abrahams, David Zucker, Jerry Zucker	37,000,000
10. Out Of Africa (releasing 1986) (not)	Sydney Pollack	36,811,000
11. Fanny Braxton's Day Of	John Hughes	36,400,000
12. Death And Out In Beverly Hills	Paul Mazursky	35,198,000

\*Australian production

For commentary see Weekly under 1986 and 86

Weekly Weekly no. 325 no. 52 14,000, 1987 pp25

TOP 100 GROSSING RELEASES			
WEEK ENDING 12/1/80			
RANK	TITLE	WEEKS IN RELEASE	GROSS TO DATE
1	Grease	10	\$10,300,000
2	Star Wars	10	\$10,200,000
3	The Shogun	10	\$10,100,000
4	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
5	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
6	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
7	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
8	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
9	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000
10	The Untouchables	10	\$10,000,000

For commentary, see *Monday, July 2002*. To request more figures for this item, click on the "More" link. The Australian release date for this item is 2002-07-20.

Source: Foreign Affairs (New York) vol. 327, 1964, p. 100.

Top 10 Australian Albums of the Year (1990)			
Rank	Album	Artist	Weeks on Chart
1	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	10
2	The New Fast Forward	The Go-Betweens	8
3	Shine	The Go-Betweens	7
4	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	6
5	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	5
6	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	4
7	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	3
8	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	2
9	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	1
10	Crash! Boom! Squash!	The Go-Betweens	1

But throwback to the days of Captain Burger, listed unimpaired by Hagen's tough steel, namely *Osobodo Gumbi* is the 1st pilot who thrives in equatorial rain. The Man From Miami Place gets a noticeable run for its money (*Osobodo* the top of this short has remained much the same for the past several years). Through *Man From Miami* has proved successfully for a slightly better position. The other 4 films (mostly story of 1980) and some other *Osobodo* Machine makes a really modest profit at the very best of this for *Osobodo* 1st position is *Osobodo*.

Dennis Kennedy (Baker, 1979) 1979

10. <b>Top 100 Greatest Ever</b>			
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>195 RELEASE DATE</b>	<b>CRITIC RANK</b>	<b>GROSS FILM RENTAL IN \$K</b>
1. <b>E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial</b>	1982	Steven Spielberg	208,370,040
2. <b>Star Wars</b>	1977	George Lucas	169,500,000
3. <b>Warner's Of The Jaws</b>	1975	Richard Dreyfuss	160,000,000
4. <b>The Empire Strikes Back</b>	1980	Iris Koster	141,000,000
5. <b>Jaws</b>	1975	Steven Spielberg	129,000,000
6. <b>Close Encounters</b>	1977	Robert Wise	129,000,000
7. <b> Raiders Of The Lost Ark</b>	1981	Steven Spielberg	118,000,000
8. <b>Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom</b>	1984	Steven Spielberg	107,000,000
9. <b> Beverly Hills Cop</b>	1984	Mark Rosin	106,000,000
10. <b>Back To The Future</b>	1985	Robert Zemeckis	95,000,000

For explanation see Murphy *et al.* In recent times on this particular chart (Shanderson, Intense Jones And The People Of Ocean County 1988-1990 and 1991-1992) the Future have replaced Grease (1979), Sexies (1982), The Doctors (1975) and The Soulmates (1982) in the order.

Received February 1995; revised May 1995; accepted June 1995.

TOP 100 MOVIES OF THE YEAR (1966)			
TITLE	IN RELEASE DATE	DIRECTOR	GROSS REVENUE ESTIMATED (\$ MIL)
1. Gone With The Wind	1939		
2. Star Wars	1977	George Lucas	\$269,578,420
3. E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial	1982	Steven Spielberg	\$293,418,760
4. The Sound Of Music	1965		\$291,291,427
5. Jaws	1975	Robert Wise	\$250,000,000
6. The Godfather	1972	Francis Ford Coppola	\$246,340,100
7. The Godfather Part II	1974	Francis Ford Coppola	\$218,746,000
8. The Empire Strikes Back	1980	Irvin Kershner	\$194,324,000
9. Return Of The Jedi	1983	Richard Marquand	\$169,822,400
10. The Shogun	1980	Richard Marquand	\$145,499,400

These figures show much change in the chart over the last 20 years. The movement in 1950-55 is similar to the 1970-75 period, and the 1960-65 period is the most volatile. The figures on the last 10 years (1970-75) are the most volatile. The figures on the last 10 years (1970-75) are the most volatile.

(Date First paid) \$100.00  
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# R·E·V·I·E·W·S

- Angel Heart
- Black Widow
- The Decline Of The American Empire
- 84 Charing Cross Road
- 52 Pick-Up
- Gothic
- Les Patterson Saves The World
- Lethal Weapon
- Personal Services
- Twelfth Night
- Utopia
- When The Wind Blows

## Nostalgia Specials

- Ginger E Fred
- Hoosiers
- My Life As A Dog
- Radio Days

## ● MY LIFE AS A DOG

Too scared to look forward, generations about the future, egged on by baby boomers continuously rediscovering the importance of their youth, we are drowning in nostalgia. Everyone is looking back, even those whose youth was as recent as seven or eight years ago. So films keep going back to the chilly future.

Nostalgia reached its most cloying and distasteful form in the film *Stand By Me*, Rob Reiner's over-extended distillation of a long idea based on a Stephen King short story. This is nostalgia in its most retrograde, focused on one moment — and so particular as to lose any universality. Nostalgia on self-pity; nostalgia as hatred of the present; nostalgia as prurience by Ronald

Rausen. It made me sad to be forced to look back through another's eyes, rather than happy to share a past experience.

Fortunately, not all nostalgia is permeated by the American sense of loss. Swedish director Lasse Hallström has no regrets and no desire to turn back the clock in *My Life As A Dog*; he just wants to recount the troubled, wonderful time when a 12-year-old leaves behind his childhood and enters the world of adults. The film is not a sentimental journey back; it is a memory brought forward so that people in the present can recall their own memories and relieve those, together with little Ingemar Johansson.

Ingemar, who is brilliantly played by Anton Glanzkow, is all pug nose, spiky hair and ready grin, not unlike a playful puppy. Indeed, he identifies closely with his dog Sanna and with Lotta, the dog



BELOW THE LAUGHS: Anton Glanzkow in *My Life As A Dog*

There's something whimsical and peeking about the beauty of this film, reminding us not to take life too seriously, not to take ourselves too seriously. With a little ignorance comes wisdom, with wonder comes optimism. Being constantly retrospective changes our perspective, it creates meaning and distractions. One of the definitions of nostalgia is "Home-unknown as a dream." *My Life at 40* highlights the destructive side of prying fondly for what has been, and the strength to be gained in celebrating what was, is and will be.

**MY LIFE AS A ZOOI** Created By Larry Haskins  
Executive producer: Wallace Bergeland. Screen-  
play: Louis L'Amour. Music: Lawrence Rothenberg. Cast:  
and crew: James Belushi, Christopher Penn, Anne  
Peggy Lively, John C. McGinley, George C. Scott.  
Synopsis: Mountain Man, Barnyard Cat Adventure.  
Rating: PG-13 (1995). Arts. Love. History.  
Crew: Director: Francis Ford Coppola. Screen-  
play: Michael Newman (Cage). By Mike Cern-  
ich. S. K. Reunited. (C). Producer company:  
A. S. Reunited. Producer: Director: Sandy Stern. 1995  
release. Reunited. 1995.

Arden is the game-chewing chick-out chick — as sweet and nutty as pecan pie. She believes Jesus came to earth on a



In a series of lock-gospel variety shows, Brother Bud's choir members don silver gowns and wigs and Sheldon performs as his fantasy persona Wayne Jennings, complete with cow-boy hat and twanging accents.





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BODY LANGUAGE: Dorothy Dandridge and Perry David in *The Genders Of The American Empire*

levels of social behaviour and social interaction in North American society. It is not a simple matter here of the 'mis-generation' losing its way and squandering its values in the process. This is a film which tries to reveal the underlying characteristics of a position which says, "everything goes" as long as no one has to take responsibility for the consequences. If the film is taken too literally however, its efforts to dig into the reasons for decline can be misinterpreted as a duplication of the corruption which it is trying to foreground and critique.

In a particularly crucial scene, four women talk about their spouses and boyfriends and affairs in what initially appears to be a rather liberal way. Their conversation boils down to the equivalent of male locker room talk, except the content is different: comparisons of penis size, male sexuality, male figures. As much as their conversation appears to be different, it is also regressive and superficial mostly because of the model which they are

reproducing. But this is duplicated as well by their spouses who, while preparing a collective dinner, engage in the most childlike of discussions of their affairs and of women in general.

So there is an interesting convergence here. On the surface everyone appears to be rather intellectual, articulate, intelligent. Underneath they are repressed, and almost completely infantile in their views of each other. This is brought out by our female character who quite naively believes that her husband has never had an affair with anyone and that he loves her. She is shocked to discover that he sleeps with his students and has absolutely no respect for her. All of these shippages are signs of a disease which simultaneously allows people to exist at a number of different levels without any clear morality to connect those levels to each other. There is a potentially religious implication to this, a kind of catholicism (with a small c) about the sabbled and questionably in search of redemption. Since the film was made in a social context heavily dominated by

Catholicism, Arcand is clearly critiquing the hypocrisy of a society which can maintain all of these levels at once and yet at the same time appear to be modern and look as if it has out-grown its past.

The charade which the characters play out in relation to each other is centred on their fantasies about power and control. This is best exemplified in a scene in which an older male academic goes to a massage parlor and meets a young, attractive part-time student who works there. She proceeds to masturbate him quite mechanically as if he is just one more cog on an assembly line of men looking for the quick sexual fix. She talks in a rather bland and random way about her life while he grins as he organizes approaches. At the crucial point he has to ask her to complete the job properly, which she does. The lack of emotion, the distance, the vacuumness of his lines to her, all of this reduces the power of sexuality to a game without meaning. What stands out is the metaphor of loss, the orgasm not leading

to closeness, affection or even some measured verbal exchange, but rather to the consensus of her needs and the power of men to supply the money which she has to have to complete her necessary education. Inevitably, they develop a relationship outside of the marriage parlour, but once again there is an air of deception around all of his activities.

Both characters use each other and neither grows as a consequence of their mutually shared experiences. In all cases in the film, circular connections develop between characters only to be broken by further levels of superficiality. A young boy discovers his sexuality through an older woman who had earlier joked about his naivety. A sexually repressed female academic engages in a semi-masochistic relationship with a working-class heavy who dominates her and she learns to love it. The central male of the group turns out to be a repressed homosexual fearful of having contracted AIDS.

The film's success has puzzled me. Its evocation of the split between men and women is far less self-reflexive than it should be given the extensive work of feminist filmmakers over the last 15 years. *Arnaud's* effort to open a window into the unconscious needs of men and women can at best be described as superficial. But if the film is taken less as a tale about the decline of values in North American society and more as a narrative about Quebec, a new and more substantial depth emerges.

*Arnaud* is part of a generation of people who spent their formative years fighting for Quebec's independence. Most of the men and women in the film are historians. Yet they seem incapable of using the precepts of historical knowledge to evaluate their own private lives. This gap between the personal and the public, between the professed aims of a generation to radically redefine the identity of Quebec and their duty practice as individuals, becomes a metaphor then for the decline of Quebec, and for the manner in which a whole generation has lost a sense of direction. The independence movement was more than a backdrop in the development of a nation's sense of identity and history. It was also an attempt to come to grips with the radical imbalances of Canadian society which have seen the needs of the majority French population marginalized ever since confederation.

Taken in this way, *The Decline* becomes a parable about the new consciousness in Quebec. It is a consciousness which has forsaken the battle for cultural identity in favour of individual need, which has diluted the exigencies of history in favour of immediate gratification.

The film's success can be traced to the fact that it both celebrates and laments the loss, that it is simultaneously searching for a strategy with which to examine the decline while also contributing to it. On both sides of this

rather dangerous coin, *The Decline* produces an image of an image which it is also intent on promoting. It is thus to be expected that both *Arnaud* and the producers of the film would agree to a contract with Paramount Pictures to remake the film in Hollywood. *The Decline* is not descending: its focus on sexual transgression and sexual game-playing reveals in contradiction and from it we learn more about the grammar of cynicism than we do about the context within which the characters live and which they are reacting against. Yet this is precisely why the film has been shown in more than 50 countries and has produced one of the largest returns in the history of the industry in Quebec.

Ken Schacht

THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE: Directed by Denis Arnaud. Producer: René Bédard. Screenplay: Pierre Gaudin. Director of photography: Guy Ouellet. Production designer: Jocelyne Gauthier. Music: François Desrosiers. Editor: Marc-André Peller. Cost Designer: Michel Gauthier. Costume Designer: Louise Poiré. Props: Daniel Gervais. Set Decorator: Pierre Gauthier. Hair: René Gagné. Title Designer: Jacques Gauthier. Credits: Michel Gaudin. Music: Pierre Gaudin. Production company: Coproduction/Produit par: Les Distributeurs Neovision. Screen: 35 mm. Canada, 1991.

## ★ 52 PICK-UP

Fifty-two pickup is one of the first card games American kids learn. It's always taught by an older kid to a younger kid. The older one deals to the innocent by raising the deck to the ear, the younger kid then has to push them all up. The game's lesson is that it's better to be the dealer. It's the point of *GoldenEye*'s film *52 Pick-Up*, too, along with picking up a \$32,000 payoff!

Bankruptist Ray Schneider is married to Ann Margret, who's about to run for City Council. They are rich post-

yuppies. Three guys try to blackmail Schneider, threatening to send videotape of thirty weekends spent with his mistress to his wife. The trio consists of a salesman, psychotic Keith Carrawine type (John Glover), who runs a porno cinema, a fat, cowardly, despondent peck police manager (Robert Trebor), and Mad Squad's Clarence Williams III, registering cynicism behind shades.

Schneider does not push easily, so the trio ups the ante. They kidnap the mistress and murder her — on videotape. Then they kidnap Schneider, take him to the murder room, and show him the tape. This is an industrial strength sex-and-violence sequence; sensitive viewers should avoid it. The trio takes evidence framing Schneider for the murder and use this new threat to extort even more money. But Schneider preemptively informs his wife and together they engineer a falling-out among the blackmailers, two of whom kill each other. Schneider and Ann-Margret sacrifice his cherished Jaguar XK-8 convertible to blow up the third.

Shirley Leonard, crime novelist of the decade, co-wrote the screenplay from his own novel. Leonard has not had much luck with films made from his novels, not with original screenplays (see Richard Gullifer's article in *Cinema Paper* 63, May 1997). Surprisingly, so his novel bristle with film references, cinema, images, violence, and characters stolen from the screen (the villain of *Gold Case* is Joe Don Baker to a tee, the hero of *City Promises* was written while watching James Edward Olson on *Affairs of the Mind*).

For *52 Pick-Up*, he seems to have provided over the running out of subtlety and characters — the union/management power struggle at the plant, for instance — and the glazing up of what's left: Black, industrial Detroit becomes



EYE CONTACT: Ray Schneider and Ann Margret in *52 Pick-Up*





"I cannot tell who will come out of it victorious: the destroying city or the human being." In his role as defender of the people, one finds irregular and sincere representations. Puffin has his familiar interview, but how should he explain, let alone defend the story? They are a mystery to him and, at least, his fear of television is an incomprehension in the face of the great post-modern power. Given our access to television he tries to take on the baggage of a generational conflict. "Potentially every generation seems to have this mysterious access to it."

It comes in an unexpected way, these days. Fellini invokes the names of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, showing Giulietta Masina and Marcello Mastroianni to do so. For Fellini, Rogers and Astaire evoke the great American cinema; the capricious and artlessly conjured-up fun of an unprejudiced and uncensored America. They are "portrayed" by Masina and Mastroianni, through the way they play, America and Europe. These two credibly represent the role of a European-American cinema that has been in the European cinema since the appearance of the films of Fellini himself.

Maslin and Mastrolunas are reunited melodramatically for the first time in 40

towns? Where is the glamour and romance, the sophistication craved and promised by publicity mills? No such event takes place. No evidence of urban dancers gliding against dancing cityscapes, just a burning and a standing of two warm-hearted flics. From our close-up view within the rehearsal, they are just Amelia and Pippo, never Giggles and Fred at all.

Is this the cure that lies in the hands of Fellini's film? I suspect that it is. The corn of much half decay and putrefaction, of proscribed innocence, of his wife and his friend, the corn of homogeneity. So what saves *Amelia* and *Pippa*? What is so special about these that they might launch Fellini's ultimate salvo on behalf of cinema? It is because they are truly innocent, that is, they are untouched by television. Like Fellini, who has said: "I don't watch (it). It doesn't occur to me. I've not at all contact about it," they are not television's audience. Face to face with it, *Amelia* is harassed and *Pippa* is indifferent. Unlike their viewers, who have no narrative desires beyond that which generates a television segment, *Amelia* and *Pippa* have a history, a memory and a storytelling capacity. Pippa's traitor as sex changer and her

## PERSONAL SERVICES

Most people will be familiar with the bawdier press accounts of Cynsthan Bayner's recent trial and acquittal concerning sex parties held at her infamous London brothel, which specialised in catering for the perverse sexual demands of elderly men. Dubbed "Madam Cyn" by the British tabloid, her complicity and the plotting conspiracy's trial allegations told the most 'in-a-bore' tale since the Falklands War. It was a classic example of engineered Whipping/ Fleet Street exploitation, affording celebrity status to someone they felt legitimised their paper's editorial line of "access to the public interest."

The combined values of *Revelation* screenwriter David Leland (*Miss Jane*) and director Terry Jones (all of the Monty Python films) pay scant regard to the "event" notoriety of their fictionalized character, Christine Palmer (unofficially realized by Julie Walters). Instead they focus upon the contradictions of personality (she refers to her past rates as "nuts") and circumstances that combine to produce a warm, vulgar, yet sensitive woman who accommodates the desires of "goodness" to be slightly disappointed and then move on.

So, instead of the puerile, unengaging treatment I suggested the subject matter to receive, I was pleasantly surprised by the level of dramatic depth that both Walters' first performance and Jones' relaxed narrative perspective encouraged. Still, *Personal Services* has its fairer share of elements such as the sophisticated middle-aged fellow who frequents the apartment dressed in covered public-schoolboy attire warning for "tough snacks on the hot-hot", or the translations of jargon and euphemism spoken by those "on the game." One still acknowledges, however, those potent irritations throughout the show, that of over-used sexual references.

But for all of its on-screen cautions, the movie also draws attention to the previously pathetic situations of its largely despicable characters. Christine, despite her flawed actions, is still herself trapped into a lifetime of pursuing a "redeemable" point beyond intimacy with her "dream man", ironically the very type of person who might as least prove to be a clown. Similarly, the old man who get a chance to express their repressed whims and fantasies appears more as tragic victims of puritanical British social norms, rather than perceived sexual deviants who must suppress their own deepest sexual desires by being punished as "misogyny boys".

In this sense, the film's real strength is the subtextual social critique, in which the filmmakers locate Christine and her husband in a position strangely analogous to Thatcher's Britain. When viewed as complementary to *After Lou's* anthropomorphic portrayal of the wealthier side of

## GER E FRED

years, just as the movie hall characters they portray are also brought together again after a long absence. Along with a haphazard choice of characters (that can now be described as Felliniesque without the necessity of quotation marks), *Donnie* and *Pope* have been invited to perform in a television spectacle called "Here's To You". Fellini's usual parade of dwarfish and colloquially treated women are supplanted by Woody Allen, Clark Gable and Marlon Brando (importantly who are all characterized by the impersonal concentration of smiling TV celebrities).

Technicians assist, it is never effaced, and its influence is to be found every-where. The film's expensive visual and spatial beginnings, art in developing scenes, streets exploding with information screens, billboards and milling audiences, probably contrast as we move through the wall of the screen along with the characters. Poling glides and glides through the city, into the cavernous TV anterooms, along narrowing corridors, as at last emerges, step by step into the grand chamber of the apartment itself.

Fellini imagines that he shows us the world of television, dragging us through the scenes from our "frontal exposure" so that we may see from the sidelines what is actually happening.

And what of Amelia and Pippin's climactic performance as Ginger and Fred — this scene, which the entire film delivers

comic, romantic and pastoral origins is the underlying argument of the film's defence against television's standards of the instantaneity.

**Keywords:** *children, adolescents, parents, family, communication, family structure, family functioning, family relationships, family processes, family environment, family support, family resources, family stress, family problems, family difficulties, family challenges, family issues, family concerns, family needs, family goals, family values, family beliefs, family attitudes, family behaviors, family roles, family norms, family expectations, family responsibilities, family obligations, family commitments, family investments, family sacrifices, family contributions, family achievements, family successes, family failures, family setbacks, family disappointments, family frustrations, family conflicts, family tensions, family strains, family pressures, family demands, family burdens, family loads, family responsibilities, family obligations, family commitments, family investments, family sacrifices, family contributions, family achievements, family successes, family failures, family setbacks, family disappointments, family frustrations, family conflicts, family tensions, family strains, family pressures, family demands, family burdens, family loads*

[illegible]

#### WATSON Amelia and Pippin's marriage celebrated 10th





codes that they must always look on the bright side.

The couple combine a childlike ignorance of the possible effects of a nuclear explosion with an uneasy feeling that things are very different this time. They acknowledge the lost war and its leaders, looking back with affection at the soldiers, the blackest, the all-clear, the cups of tea.

"You somehow know where you were then," says Jim. Everything seems much more important this time. They are unable to comprehend fully the monstrous nature of the war which now threatens them.

Despite courage, humour, and efforts to do "the correct thing" according to the belief, the couple's final isolation and suffering as they attempt to hold on to a trust in "the power that he" makes *When The Wind Blows* a powerful anti-nuclear statement. It is of enduring relevance as long as the question of nuclear weapons and safety occupies our imagination, and as long as political doubledeals and disempowerment poison over the issue of nuclear disarmament. The issue of civilian risk through accident is a concern even for those who believe in nuclear armament.

The story's durability is a measure of its impact and its power to tap universal emotions. While some audiences may watch the film with more knowledge than the Briggs have about such things as fallout, the inadequacies of civil defence and the symptoms of radiation poisoning, in the end a fear, or at least suspicion, of ultimate ignorance must remain in everyone, even the most well-informed. There can be no guarantee that other attempts at survival would be much more effective or less misguided than the Briggs', so that the effect of *When The Wind Blows* is not to evoke pitying sympathy but identification and empathy for the sort of impotence the individual must suffer in the face of nuclear attack.

Raymond Briggs has, with perception and a distinctive sense of humour, created characters who carry no suggested sentiment. The story works in a cumulative way, progressing lightly towards its weighty and inevitable conclusion when it becomes obvious that no amount of humour or strength of character can provide a happy ending. Outside the cottage, the landscape is wasted and barren. Inside, a deteriorating Hilma and Jim wait for help which does not come. In an attempt to understand and to cheer them both up, Jim slips further and further into his use of cliché and slogans gleaned, without any real understanding, from newspapers and radio. "Oh yes, the Emergency Services will have sprung into action at the first alarm signal," he proclaims, despite the continued absence of any sign of assistance. Finally, the couple retreats to their shelter and try to pray.

The lightness with which the story should begin is lacking in the film, spoiling its cumulative effect. David Rowe's title song does not help, being much too

heavy-handed and morbidly to open with. Perhaps another reason is that the initial exchanges between the couple do not transfer easily into the film version. Comic lines are missed, rather lost in the abundance of moving images, or passed over too quickly with little time allowed for their assimilation, and Jim's personal malapropisms are more easily missed on the page than in the film. There is a danger at times of the two characters becoming silly, laden with empty chatter, rather than comic, but with the increasing gravity of their situation they become less disconcerting and more sympathetic.

The film was directed by Jeremy Mordaunt who was also responsible for the adaptation and direction of an earlier work by Briggs, the award-winning film, *The Snowman*. On directing animation, Mordaunt has said, "The actors in animation are guys sitting at a desk and you have to get them to feel the same things, get consistency through all these fragments." Artistically this challenge of consistency and coherence has been achieved as TVCortinas (TVC) London, by the animators and artists who hand-drew 100,000 frames, 600 scenes. To bring the drawings to life, wide stretches of Hilma and Jim's house were constructed with movable walls, providing three-dimensional rather than flat articulated backgrounds to bring perspective to the sets. These model sets were shot with a specially rigged 35mm stop frame camera, that enabled tracking, panning and tilting within the built interiors. The 35mm frames were then enlarged and animated cells of the figures were dropped to cover the moving images of the background.

The use of animation serves the story well, probably better than a nuclear live-action feature, where identifiable actors would detract from the action of Hilma and Jim Briggs as Mr and Mrs Everyman, and where the cost of certain scenes would be prohibitive. The near-destruction of the cottage and visualisation of a nuclear blast laying waste the land, its towns and villages, are effective and powerful in the animated film. Non-withstanding Hiroshima, large-scale nuclear war remains outside the realm of our tangible experience. We can still only speculate and imagine the devastation of such a disaster, so that illustration or caricature, with an special ability to capture the archetypal nature of things, has been able to express the formidable essence of this grim, modern tale.

S. J. Ayre

## • 84 CHARING CROSS ROAD

Is there any truth in the rumour that *84 Charing Cross Road* will next appear on air? To date, what began as an exchange of letters between a lively Jewish bibliophile in New York, Hilda and Handl, and an antiquarian bookseller in London, Frank Doel, has metamorphosed from love-letters from, from which an engaging sense of character emerged, then as a 1993 television production, next as a stage-play (London 1980, Broadway 1982), and now as a film whose production was divided between the two relevant countries.

That the unlikely best-seller has proved so media-friendly is probably due to the development of its central relationship, which is fuelled by a love of books, is several times on the verge of the consummation of meeting, and is thwarted twice by Handl's financial problems and finally by Doel's death shortly before Handl at last realises her dream of getting to London. The relationship is essentially a conversation in letters and the film very properly uses a good deal of voice-over and direct address to convey to convey this. As director David Jones cuts between the



IN A BOOK LAND: Hilda and Frank in the film of the play of the book of the letters, *84 Charing Cross Road*

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS Directed by Jeremy Mordaunt. Producer: John Coates. Executive Producer: Ian Harvey. Screenplay: Raymond Briggs. Animation and design: Richard Kennedy. Music: David Harewood. Cost design: Paul Brown. Storyboards: Jeremy Mordaunt. Richard Kennedy. John Ashworth. Music: David Harewood. Title song: Midge Waterson. Lyrics: Vernon Pugh. Artistic adviser: John Maitland. Production company: Mordaunt in association with British Screen. Film: Two International. UK: London. Program: Screen Distribution. Screen Sales: Screen 85 minutes. Great Britain, 1988







DENNIS HOPPER—Hopper in *Hombre*

mean through their training with a small group of locals looking on. His methods are different, too different from what they consider to be effective or familiar (hand) towns square small minds, get the picture? If this were not a recognizable enough cause for conflict and its existence not clearly enough indicated, one of the small towns later tells Hopper that he is in a small town and that small town folk don't like change.

Convincing characterization is not one of the things the makers are concerned with. Their energies are directed into different areas, into the mechanics of effective narrative (rather than the telling of a good story, an effective narrative being one that maintains attention levels with as little cost to the viewer as possible. There is no accumulation, no building up of a story, but a sequence of recognizable scenes whose interconnection rests in the fact that the same place — not characters — fill them and whose place within the narrative sequence is signalled by the persons 'beginning in', 'middle in' or 'end in' rhetoric. The unambiguous 'beginning in' between Hackson and Herley is mirrored by a declaration of love 'end in'. The confrontation/interconnection 'middle in' comes where Hackson's team, several games into the season, is doing poorly and his persistence as coach is to be put to a vote. Here again there is an embarrassing hollowing and predictability to the action. The whole scene takes place between the four biggest 'quotation marks' you ever saw. At the beginning of the film we are told that the school's star player is refusing to play (no real reason given, no dramatic foundation), then in the middle of Hackson's dismissal, the star player appears at the back of the school

hall and says he will play if Hackson is kept on as coach. All that is required is our momentary recognition that there has been a 'close shave' for Hackson and that he has come through as the last man standing. Every good story has one of those happy bits where everything looks like it's going to fall apart but then — miracle — it doesn't. Trouble is *Hombre* has been in pieces from the start.

Rater Dennis Hopper as the man who doesn't belong anymore and this not only within the fiction of the film. He is so good, but in a film like *Hombre* the disparity becomes absurd. He is like the real bull content in the McHollywood bazaar. He's really there but it doesn't make much difference.

The last half of this long film could only be described as tedious. We are treated to scenes and scenes of slow-motion historical action inter-cut with scoreboards showing uncomfortably close scores (the simulation of tension). If that were not bad enough it is set in the most horrendous, inappropriate, bland and overwrought soundtrack since *Raidy*.

#### Angel Hearts

**WOOOZE** Directed by Dean Pitchford. Producers: Carter De Haven. Angelo Pizzo. Associate producer: Graham Henderson. Executive producers: John Daly, David Gelson. Screenplay: Angelo Pizzo. Director of photography: Fred Murphy. Production designer: Dana Hendrix. Music: Jerry Goldsmith. Editor: O. Timothy Gilmore. Cost: Dana Henderson. Coach: Norman Cole. Camera: Anthony Mann/Panzer, Dennis Hopper (direct). Video Facility: Central Film/Futura (New Haven). Camera Room (New York). Music: David Rother. Editor: O. Timothy Gilmore. Production cost: Jerry Henderson. Film Corporation/Carter De Haven Productions. Distributor: Village Roadshow. Screen: 110 minutes. USA: 1989.

## • ANGEL HEART

The opening of *Angel Heart* is a low-angle, low-lit shot of a New York scene. It's night, snow is falling out of the manholes, and right there, for a second or two (remembering that De Niro makes a special appearance in the film) you might expect a discoloured yellow cab to come out of the scene and across the screen, but then, a second or two later, you realize it's not quite there: the shot's too tight — in compensation it's reminiscent of the alley that Brando and Saint looked it down in *On The Waterfront* — but it's not sharp enough, there's a sense of shape but no sense of outline. There's also a feeling of anticipation, yet everything remains quite static, nothing moves to shot through the haze of blue and darkness like, say, the checkered yellow cab.

*Angel Heart's* visual composition makes for something paradoxical, as though it's intentionally expressive (a threatening, unsettling atmosphere) and yet simultaneously empty of emotional expression. It's as though there is something there and not there at the same time, as though the scene's in limbo. A few seconds more and the low-lighting and interjection has slipped into a sense of it only 'appearing' to be that way. It's looking back, and I no longer

hold any doubts, *Angel Heart* is an impressionist rather than an expressionist movie. It is impressionist in two ways.

The first is in the 'purity' sense, that of late 19th century impressionism. The opening is heavy with shadows, lacking the predominance of high key lighting and colour typically associated with impressionism. But the film makes up for it in the way the surroundings, objects, and characters form a completely animated surface, and appear fused to one another, for *Angel Heart* is heavy with descriptive detail: the opening shot is cluttered with trash, spilling over ledges, up against buildings, collected along the sidewalk, and among the trash is to be found a mutilated body (just more trash) — it's like being on a cake, making utterly any sharp outlines, and smothering any sense of movement or proportion within the frame.

The second way, intimately tied to the first, is the sense of 'making an impression', of wanting to be impressive. On the combined level of its cinematography and editing, *Angel Heart* is a film that self-consciously wants to impress you. Take, for instance, the way the majority of sequences or scenes run by you fast a walk, panoramic shot (for interiors as well as exteriors) composed with decorative and illustrative details, symbolic paraphernalia, and lush architectural designs (they're arranged but their arrangement is meaningless), characters either enter or are already implanted within the scene, and a whole dramatic situation is played out through an evenly paced montage of close-ups from several angles, it's a consciously contrived visual style that falls somewhere between narrative description and pure visual indulgence.

The characters, as already suggested, fall prey to the same fate: it's almost the way the majority of characters are not set off, or set against, but set into the compositions. Marley Parber and Patricia Patterson once wrote of De Niro that "he's very good at wild music scenes and better at poignant interview scenes" (for example, the "she's your fiancé" scene in *Miss Smith* and most of *Ten Minutes*). In *Angel Heart*, however, De Niro (as Louis Cyphre) has the chance to do neither, rather, he is sculpted out of snippets that the camera insists on pointed fragments, a silver walking stick with a horn-shaped cross at its tip, a heavy beard and a bob in his hair (*Alvin*-like), and a jewellery store assortment of rings. Further examples: the Chondrocarapax space of detective Harry Angel (Mickey Rourke), the two-day middle shadowing his face, the cigarette that's stuck between his lips every so often, the gold tooth of blues man Tessa Sweet, a nose guard conspicuously resting on the nose of a Coney Island water seated by the beach (Check the inconsistency of this last guy: it's winter and the reason he's got a nose guard on is because he has just found a whole box of them under the board-

walk, and "anyway, it helps keep the rain off" Fine, but I still don't understand why this guy's in a night and sunglasses, while his wife is knee deep in sea water with her skirt and coat baled up.) In this respect, the relationships of characters are reduced to the mere elaborateness of an already elaborate world — it's just more icing on the cake.

No doubt, at the dramatic level, *Angel Heart* is also hell bent on being impressive. The film has been described as the simultaneous reinventing of two genres — a meeting of the classic detective story with the noir/detective genre. You don't see anything particularly new from either side. From the literary scene, there is Hammett's *The Dime Store*, and pulpier stuff like Jonathan Lethem's *Scholar's Shipyard*, more notable is Ross Macdonald and *The Blue Hammer* with its weirdo religious neo that rolls out the image of the detective figure as a figure whose search for others is undercut in the search for himself (*Angel Heart* has detective Harry Angel on a quest for a missing person — a notorious band singer, Johnny Favorite, who went bad on a contract made with Louis Cyphre 13 years ago — that takes him through religious lunaticism in New

York to woodsmen down New Orleans way, and reveals a Prussian and God-pat plot by the end of the process.)

Coming in from the other side, one would only have to think of Doris Argerion's horror films, whose central characters are always ensnared in an investigative plot (*Cal O' Nine Tails*, *Deep Red*, *Inferno*, et al). Indeed, I'm sure Parker has borrowed an Argerion motif — a full-fronted shot of a female with one primary colour glowing in a window — for a recurring flashback sequence.

Also, while reading R.J. Thompson's review of *Overlook* in *Fantasia*, I cannot help thinking that Parker has borrowed from Walter Hill. Why else move the story from New York (where it all takes place in the book) to Louisiana?

Then there's sex, played for sensuousness rather than sensuality. The climactic sex scene with Harry and the vodoun priestess Sophyane Proudfoot (Lisa Bonet) — the one that earned the film an X rating until a few seconds were cut — looks as if it was staged by a minor porno boyzoo. There's plenty of forensic editing in this scene, with high angle shots of Mickey Rourke's over-the-speed-limit thrashing, close-ups of Bonet sweating and screaming, writhing

shorts, magnetic flashbacks, water mixed with blood seeping through the ceiling and dripping on their bodies, and it's staged against a score that is hammering the beating room.

Compare this with an earlier sex scene. Harry meets his secretary who has the lowdown on the missing person case. Most some they're on a bed undressing each other's clothes, and again, there's a montage of close-ups from different angles — her lips, Harry's hand between her legs, suspenders undone, the skirt slipping off her waist and so on — as the seductress spills the information. Her spiel ends. Then, as though the passion's spent, Harry rolls over and sits on the bed facing the camera, he smokes a cigarette between his lips while she's up behind him, making his decisions. She asks, "Did I do good?", he replies, "You did great." End of scene. Get my drift about some thing there and not there all at the same time? It's the ambiguity of the situation that makes that scene succeed (in contrast with the seductress of the robbery and dialogue). It's a pity *Angel Heart* has only a few moments such as this where there's a case for poetic licence.

Finally, what is interesting about



DOWN THESE MEAN STREETS: Mickey Rourke man go





KEEP ON TAKING THE TALKIES: Mickey Rourke reads off script in

Angel Heart to that all of them appears to have no direct relation with advancing the plot, or doesn't figure in any schematic way to the majority of symbolic details. These usually appear at the beginning of a scene, just before the camera focuses in on a particular situation: a couple of rats rummaging through trash under the Coney Island boardwalk, a New York street scene where a car pulls up to the curb and Harry Beatty asks the girl stepping out if it's a new car and if that's her boyfriend behind the wheel, and then continues on his way. Or, these details appear at the edge of the frame, while some other event is played out in the foreground. For instance, a little girl with a my doll to whom Harry sends a couple of affectionate glances as he's negotiating with the attention of the fishing, or, the New Orleans street scene with a line of black kids tap dancing along the boulevards, which at one point, taken in, from Harry's point of view, a clear-up of a set of metal railroad shoes tapping the concrete. (It should be mentioned that the tapping sound is carried over onto the next scene, highlighting the cutting and adding to the unassuming sense of what's to be seen there — like Coppola's *The Cotton Club*.) These are like snippets of film that have been leftover in the editing process, and what's striking about them is the way they look as unnecessary yet appear more effective than the rest of the film.

John Farrow

ANGEL HEART Directed by Allen Parker. Producers Alan Marshall, Gitta Kurler. Executive producers Bruce F. Kerner, Andrew Kopp. Screenplay, John Farrow. Based on the novel *Fallen Angel* by William Henderson. Director of photography: Michael Ballhaus. Production design: Brian Morris. Music: Trevor Jones. Editor: Gerry Armstrong. Cost. all day. Rourke (Harry Beatty) Robert De Niro to Louis Lomax, Lou Marano, Richard Crenna, Randolph Mantooth, Kenneth S. Baker, Karelisa (Ellen Kline), Elizabeth Weir (Gemma), Michael Hagg (Foster), Brenda Matthews (Toot), Beverly. Production company: Caroleo Film. Distributor: Village Roadshow. 109m. 115 minutes. USA, 1988.

# RADIO DAYS

You'd have to be a hoar not to like *Radio Days*, and we are not a hoar. It really is a sweet little film — gentle and funny and nostalgic. And here we have the 'old Woody Allen' (or at least a recreation) delivering a monologue: a disembodied voice stringing together puns, anecdotes, gags, with easy coolness and deft wit, just the way most of us were first introduced to him via what used to be called 'the magic of the long-playing record' before other, bigger magic lured us away from audio technology.

The most admirable thing about *Radio Days Of Course* was its narrative elegance, and the most apparent thing about *Radio Days* is the way it is and is not a story as the expected, and accepted, sense of that word. Allen's voice informs us near the beginning that he is just going to be recounting some of his favorite anecdotes about the golden age of radio in the forties. But as the film continues both chronologic and narrative logic begin to make themselves felt, and by its end, Farrow hopes of a new year in the midst of war and the dreams and ambitions of a group of characters have become intertwined into a satisfying, lingering impression of what was lost and never was — an almost minimal note to an understated, but vibrant, story-telling performance.

It is no accident that the words we have just written might also be applied to the work of Garance Kellian, raconteur, host of a radio show, 'The Frankie House Companion', and author of *Late Whodunnos Days*. For it seems to us that *Radio Days*, whose title alone constitutes something of a challenge, would not exist were it not for Kellian's success. Kellian is the only American broadcaster of the past twenty years to threaten Allen's preeminence as the cinematic spokesperson of the US liberal intelligentsia. *Radio Days* responds to that threat by evoking both Kellian's chosen medium, radio, and his subject matter, adolescent nostalgia, from the invidious position of a film scarcely anchored in the present.

Kellian's radio show features the baby-folly kind of music which rarely finds its way onto the national networks in the United States: polka bands, singers with acoustic guitars, gospel groups and the like. Allen's film, as befits the product of an urban and raised in an urban environment, boasts a soundtrack made up mainly of familiar torch music. 'Two Times', 'The Smokey Serenade', 'Paper Doll' et al. Kellian's music one really wants to listen to, but both serve admirably to summon up The Past in all its evocative sepia splendor. And, just as Kellian has the audacity to throw in an occasional Chet Atkins or Art Hodes for listeners who aspire to some taste, so Allen

lures his ear-candy with the likes of Goodman's 'Goodbye' and Strayhorn's 'Take the A Train'.

Kellian's music tries hard to avoid suggesting the here-and-now, but Allen manages to have it both ways. Both Mia Farrow and Diane Keaton sing in this film, and both sing (extremely well) in a post-Charles Aznavour style rather than the more direct and unadorned 'charismatic' style of the forties. The Past is there, but distanced in the baroque techniques of the present. This is something Kellian's faith would not permit — for somewhere in his self-conscious fixations of *Late Whodunnos* there permeates a dream of the people — whereas in Allen's work, as we have said in these pages before, there is only a dream of the self.

That dream is most neatly realized here in one of the clever things Allen as a filmmaker does to overcome the problems raised in making an audiovisual production about an audio medium. The most obvious (and obvious) way of representing radio visually is to give visual substance to the 'fantastic' audio supposedly sets in train. We can all be puzzled that he is too naive to go for that idea. Instead, we are shown people listening to radio sets and people making notes into microphones. 'Fantasies' are sometimes described for us by Allen's voice, but they are never illustrated. This has the effect of filtering everything on the screen through the sensibility of the narrating voice (a voice which is heard far more often than is usual in narrated films). But there is something else. The fictional radio folk in the film, while scarcely deconstructed, are shown to us, we get to see them 'as they are'. Their voices only control the worlds of other fictional folk — the listeners — in the film. But Allen we never see. He is the only truly 'radio' presence in the film, wholly constituted by sound, and concentrating our 'vision' with the sounds it makes.



LIVE TO AIR: Michael Moray, William Frawley and Wallace Shawn



FOR THE LOVE OF MIKE: Tony Roberts and Dianne Wiest

There is a bit of a conflict here between the overt 'message' of the film, which is about the goodness of an imaginary community forged by radio in the past, and the singular power exerted by Allen in the imaginary community forged by his film in the present. Although the mood of the film is elegiac, and certainly it wants us to believe in collective closeness, finally the community shown in *Radio Days* is a collection of individual obsessions, each blindly pursuing its particular obsession, each fed in its own peculiar way by the sounds of radio. Rather than drawing the characters together, radio pulls them forward and apart from one another. When the young Woody Allen (for he is a character in his own film again) sees a German radio-man, just as the radio has told him he might, he tells no one. He cannot. It might be only a dream.

The most beautiful moments in the film

— and this is a film with beautiful moments — are played out in darkness, tinged with mystery and loss. As 'Goodbye' plays on the soundtrack, searchlight beams reveal across a black screen and the beauty of the night is revealed upon darkness too opens out the climax of an episode, based on an actual event, in which a frantic search for a little girl trapped in a mine shaft ends with the discovery of her corpse. If there are moments of communal closeness, they are also moments of the most profound sense of separateness — indeed, their beauty results from the interplay of those two extremes.

Boorishly, perhaps, we are suspicious of the beauty of these moments and the rarely crafted mood of *Radio Days*. The Woody Allen who speaks on the soundtrack has adapted the vocal patterns of a comedian to the stylisation of an 'artist'. Not content to entertain, he wants to see himself as the Great Gatsby. He Woe Dreams For Us. It is this pretence, and the obligatory response to it, which we find objectionable in his work (and indeed, in Kellner's as well) and which ultimately denies it the very stance he so ardently desires, making such 'Woody Allen film' merely a diverting catalogue of affectations.

#### *Bill and Diane Reiss*

**RADIO DAYS** Directed by Woody Allen. Produced by Robert Greenhut. Executive producers: Jane Pollack and Charles H. Zoffe. Screenplay: Woody Allen. Director of photography: David G. Vigen. Production designer: Barry Lombardo. Music: Dick Hyman. Editor: Susan L. Morris. Cost: Jane Farrow (Dolly West). Set: Dave Jones. Dress: Jane West (Jane Jane Foster (Pittner)). Michael Tucker (Pittner). John White (Oles). Dave Karger (New Year's Eve). Production company: Orion. Distribution: Village Roadshow. Starts 18 screens USA 1987



HOSTS WITH THE MOST: Jane Kaczmarek and David Warshaw compete at early morning radio show

## •GOTHIC

Nobody much reads Rafael Sabatini these days, and except for film adaptations of *The Sea Hawk* and *Swordsmen*, he's been shunted into the seventeenth-century shelves. At least one seventeenth-century fan has, however, stuck in the memory of almost every writer. It's the capote description of *Swordsmen*, half-swordman, half-swordsman. "He was born with the gift of laughter," says Sabatini, "and a sense that the world was mad."

Contemporary filmmakers aren't given much to laughter and madness, but Ken Russell has cornered the market on what there is, and *Gothic* is filled with both. Not laughter on the comic sense, but a cackling insanity that echoes in the empty halls of his 18th-century setting. And a sense that the world is mad? Well, the director of *Tommy*, *The Music Lesson* and *Alfred Hitchcock* has always had that to spare.

Stephen Volk's script for *Gothic* sheds a blast of white light on a corner of British literary history that's well on the way to becoming better known than Hemingway in Paris or Fanny Hill in bed. In 1816, Lord Byron rented the Villa Diodati on the shores of Lake Geneva to hide out from his crazed female admirers and get some work done. He was closely joined by Percy Shelley, Shelley's mistress Mary Godwin, and her half-sister Claire Clairmont. Floating around the place was Byron's eccentric physician and biographer John Polidori — not to mention a couple of barons and a poet. (Well, it wouldn't be a party without the poet.)

To relieve a dull weekend made duller by the reading aloud of a book of German horror stories called *Phantasmes*, Byron suggested that they all try writing a spine-chiller. Shelley passed, too drunk to trouble himself with fiction. Byron's fragment *The Fanny* was revised and printed some years later by Polidori, whose own story was a very odd piece about a skull-braced lady who goes around peering through keyholes. (Not surprising, given the picture. Turnably Spoil points of the eccentric doctor.)

As for Claire, her talent lay in other directions. Russell shows her as the classic life of the party — gripped by fits and sexual furies, capering naked around the castle's dampened vesting gallery but a thin film of mad, or, if you wish, Gabriel Byron's Byron like first choice. Even if she could write, one wonders where she would have found the time.

This leaves Mary Godwin, later Mary Shelley, and later still Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. Daughter of a distinguished philosopher and a radical socialist, she was a teenage runaway with some of the best genes in the British Empire. While the rest of the group went off, drunk, fantasized and got stories, she sat down and wrote *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*. She was 19 years old.





**HARD TO HOLD** Theresa Russell and Debra Winger present their latest costumes

for example. But his extra-Hollywood insights tend to blur towards the commercial. In a recent interview, he spoke of his ambitions to probe but also to go for the big audience. His lack of any real grasp of contemporary structures of deconstruction was clear when he gave his credo to present the 'unique characters' because we are all 'unique'. Skills and techniques from the modernist repertoire are collapsed into individualist constructionism.

So it is in *Black Widow*. The device that permits closure to begin is the detective's inner character with her case; the impersonation of character threatens a set of explorations that are both infra and supra personal. Then they are lured in a simplistic and novelistic-like narrative as hunter-chase quarry, now no longer interpretive, tracing possibilities but simplistically separate people. The settings become indicative, from post-modern urban East, to ruggedly individualistic South West right down to television land, Hawaii, domains of the misanthropic Magnum, bottle, gun and man in cone.

Hawaii permits beaches, hotels, grounding surf, bare flesh — usually facile problems of the new searching narrative. The original tensions slide into a set of self-as well-the ponder, will Russell kill again, will Winger get off with Russell's latest and so null her chances?

The cruxence of the new man is an important element in the dissolutions of

the feminist doppelgänger structure. He is like old Saint Troy, as nobly savage as ever, and not charismatic like the weakly whiteness of the first reel. He has romance, he makes Winger's locked lovers tremble, he takes her (and her dissolving double) up to see the fiery volcano and they are both, like the bush-land, scorched by the caustic heat of men and machines. Finally, we have a rocky resolution right out of regality television.

Russell returns his quaky possibilities, traces of a deconstructive dynamism survive, but these thrills can't displace a now firmly established and unimpairedly solid narrative pattern. This failure to develop the dark potential of condensing feminist deconstruction with the double-based thriller device is in part caused by a loss of nerve but also appears to stem from a constant lack of a sufficiently serious style. From the start, Russell crumbles being with handouts from local soundstage lighting to silent passage ways and obscure half-views. In the same way music is oppressively emotive and script settles into a conservative content. For all the flickering power of Russell's playing, the characters are basically rounded and archaic, Nigel Williamson going down like a great village whale of a husband, Winger and Fry exchanging glimpses of national inner depths. No real branches of the naturalistic illusion are tolerated for long.

As it stands, and as it's titled, *Black Widow* is a consciously raised shot at a visual version of the probing and proto-feminist experimental thriller, like the ones Margaret Miller used to venture in the days before she picked up, like a communicable disease, the sensitive hero from her husband, 'Rom MacDonnell'.

But maybe it's more than a raised shot; perhaps the aim is really elsewhere. Miller, like Highsmith, gets her characters in one figure, and that's the impact of the doppelgänger story. By setting that possibility and going in the opposite direction, *Black Widow* moves into ailing and less than noble tradition. To realise and then foreclose the power of the feminine through disabbling one of her aspects and sanctifying the other goes back a long way in Western culture — and in Australian culture too, as Anne Summers has informed us.

Theresa Russell makes a powerful Morgan in Fry and Debra Winger does pretty well with the unimpressive part of the Lady of the Lake. But Malory knew enough to make them aware and leave it at that. Russell both overstates and dissolves the seductiveness of the relationship. The *Black Widow* might, in director hands, have been *The Grey Wife*.

Stephen Knight

**BLACK WIDOW** Directed by Ron Farrow. Producer: David Lawrence. Executive Producer: Lawrence Mark. Screenplay: Harold Ross. Director of Photography: Conrad L. Hall. Production Designer: Gene Chisler. Music: Michael Small. Editor: John Wilson. Cost Designer: Winger (Hawaii), Theresa Russell (California). Cam. Fry (Hawaii), Debra Winger (Hawaii), Nigel Williamson (Hawaii), Terry O'Brien (Hawaii), Len Smith (Hawaii), D.W. Miller (Hawaii). Production Company: Lawrence Mark Productions in association with Austral Film and Video and United Artists Pictures. Theatrical: Fox Columbia. Screen: 100 minutes. USA, 1987.

## ◆ RECENT RELEASES A Supplementary Guide

### Map:

- Frederick's Farm (CFL)
- Lady Jane (UIP)
- Beyond The Edge
- Scandal (Village Roadshow)
- Bullshit's Luck (Yu Entertainment)
- The Supergame (Hoyne)
- Wanted Dead Or Alive (Village Roadshow)
- The Bedroom Window (Hoyne)
- The Man's Club (Filmpac)
- Hyper Segues (Village Roadshow)
- Allen Quartermain And The Lost City Of Gold (Hoyne)
- Red Boy (Village Roadshow)
- Corporation II (Village Roadshow)
- The Second Victory (Grossman Union)
- The White Monkey
- The Bullets Of The Poets

### Junior:

- Brighton Beach Muzak (UIP)
- Beyond Therapy (Village Roadshow)
- Managapan (Hoyne)
- Don Sam (CFL)
- Project X (Fox Columbia)
- The Fourth Physical (Hoyne)
- Wild Thing (Filmpac)
- Secretly Still Cop II (UIP)
- Myra Samson's Coming Home (Seven Keys)
- Amazing Stories (UIP)
- Secret Of My Success (UIP)
- Flight Of The Navigator (Village Roadshow)
- Black Day (Fox Columbia)
- Shopping Party (Director Union)
- Best Laid Scheme (Filmpac)
- Len Fogarty (Filmpac)
- The Funeral (Roman)



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- ★ Documentary fellowships.
- ★ Marketing loans.
- ★ Assistance to film and video organisations and festivals.
- ★ Special research and publication funding.

The AFC also undertakes research and prepares discussion papers on a range of issues affecting the industry, represents the Australian film industry internationally, and provides legal, business and marketing advice.

New developments at the AFC include the establishment of Film Australia, the production division of the AFC, as a company wholly owned by the Federal Government; the relocation of the Women's Film Fund to Melbourne; a Joint Venture Program for script and project development; and the launching of the film industry database.

For further information on the AFC and its assistance programs, please contact the Melbourne or Sydney offices.

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# THE SCREENING OF AUSTRALIA Vol. 1, Anatomy of a Film Industry

By Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka (Australian Screen Series, Currency Press, 1987, ISBN 0 85839 152 3, \$24.95pp)

The title refers to the recent burgeoning of the long-dormant Australian film industry if not to an equivalent-sized, underpinning film culture (in particular grips of Dermody and Jacka). It also refers to the embarking of that subculture or, better, provincial culture — "post-colonial, without being post-revolutionary" in that destination — not only across its native continent but right across the world as well as to a third sense: multi-centrally explored by them that of revealing concealed meanings.

What started out as "a brief survey" is a compilation of methodologies and views on the revival of the Australian Film Industry — a pleasant 40-page "guide" — [pp] rapidly grew into two volumes. The present one is concerned with that necessary evil, Mannheim, or more specifically, "a methodology of events in additional images: discourses of economic structures, industry policies, motives and discourses" (p13) no less. A forthcoming companion volume with the subtitle, *Anatomy of a Cultural Project*, is concerned with the aesthetic patterns of some 200 Australian films. It sets out to articulate "Australianness" — either by adoption or rejection? (p18), to sort through the categories of film within the whole body of possibilities the industry has constructed for itself, and then analyse the sometimes buried sometimes flag waving project of Australian identity: a project that unfolds unevenly in the film" (p13 again).

The first chapter, *Australian Cinema — Between Industry and Culture*, sets off rather in the manner of *The History Of The Street*, in search of that elusive, elusive Australianness (it's both informative and inconclusive, rightly branding made the problem as a bit of a red herring, in favour of Mrs Bob Elie (our would-be Mikhail Muggen) has called "cultural quadrangle" (p26, unreservedly enough) or rather, concludes "the more subtle, historically precise, politically challenging set of differences that intricately complicate the construction of Australian identity — class, region, locale, sub-culture, ethnic and racial suppositions, and sex and age" — (p47).

The second, *Industry Review*, an industrial history of Australian filmmaking over the last couple of decades, has been done before, if not quite to the same degree by writers such as Graham Shirley and Sean Adams (p 1975) and Brian McFarlane.

The same could be said for the third chapter, the longest chapter of them all, principally concerned with the Australian Film Commission, the death of the would-be David of independent filmmaking, the West Of Ziggurat, the Godfather (in both the good and the bad sense) to Australian film, but that would be a mistake for this is the crux of the problem for Dermody and Jacka: resulting a plethora of films that they dub the "APC game".

The game which — a postulate and other theory Australianism, fundamentally unproblematic and inoffensive, neither too open nor too high brow. Australianism inheres in the lyrical qualities of the bush (of the offered urban [p20], set off by tasteful period costume and set design" (p20).

In that same chapter, the authors' identity (their "romantic" and/or "anti-thesis" with no sign of a synthesis, makes its first appearance" (p103).

## CULTURE vs INDUSTRY

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Independent Film | ■ Mainstream Film |
| ■ Art              | ■ Business        |
| ■ Minority         | ■ Popular         |
| ■ Non-commercial   | ■ Commercial      |

The whole course of government and true of APC policy has been dogged by the opposition implicit between culture and industry in debates around Australian film (p20).

The fourth chapter, *The Distribution/Exhibition Sector*, which they maintain is "the most important element in the film scene" (p108) is a curious catalogue of the successes and the failures of that *Wages/Road* show (their Hepburn experiment in particular) and Greater Union (with obsessions to David Williams) and to a lesser extent Hoyts (up until *The Man From Snowy River*) have all had with Australian films (it reinforced the previous chapter, but doesn't pull quite as much as the authors seem to think it does).

The fifth, *The Struggle Over Australian Content and Access Equity Policy*, using that mechanism, the Return Of Captain Jack (as a test case: has now been overtaken by events) or is

it by the writers of the market place? It represents a major shortcoming of the book, in that the bulk of research work seems to have been done about 1962 with little towards 1984, but with nothing much up to 1987 (the preface is dated March 1986).

The final chapter, *Money — Financing, Budgets, Markets and Returns*, should be the climax. The authors devise two fictitious examples of Australian Film Financing, *Koala* (made in 1978) and *Son Of Koala* (made in 1982 that alleged success (readable apart) They go through the financial record of the Australian film industry in three stages, 1970-74, 1975-80 and 1981 "to the present" (not really).

Dermody and Jacka also come up with the full-blown version of their archetypal model, their polarisation of possibilities, the "two major financing discourses of Australian Film: the discourses of commercialism" (pp197-198).

Australia, of the private industry (production entities and financial institutions) of state competition films (the latest dated being 1985) is a jotted history of Australian film production before 1984 and a summary of 1984 processes (though not up to the 150/20 per cent outback) an assessment history from 1970-1979 of *Albie* (1979), *Palm Beach* (1979), an interesting film but hardly of majority interest and hardly a classic (elaborate, various Box Office Grosses (again hardly up to date), and finally production budgets of dozens of Australian feature films in both original and 1982 terms.

Thirteen pages of notes, no bibliography which could have at least pointed to more recent developments — there really should have been at least a substantial postscript about beyond 1984, they themselves refer to.

The slippery changing per cent of the industry" (p10) — and a less than complete index.

## INDUSTRY #1 vs INDUSTRY #2

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ■ Socially concerned   | ■ Social concern is not the business of film entertainment              |
| ■ Search for an Australian identity                                    | ■ Australia is part of the world "national identity is a negative"      |
| ■ Leftist Labor  | ■ No pointed attention but note like non-Labor                          |
| ■ Modestly budgeted films for local audience                           | ■ Anti-message films as being audience "bore"                           |
| ■ Interested in other arts, theatre middle class, university-educated  | ■ Anti-artistic artist, pursuing working class origins                  |
| ■ Film gallery   | ■ Anti-art film   |
| ■ Art film industry monopolies locally and overseas                    | ■ Pro-Hollywood — "they do it bigger and better we can learn from them" |
| ■ In favour of government regulation of industry                       | ■ For the "free market"   |
| ■ Anti-cultural imperialism  | ■ Cultural imperialism? Never heard of it                               |
| ■ Culture and political benefits for film not necessarily questionable | ■ Burnout tests too often called  |

The authors say that, with important provisos, their attitudes were formed by seventies Marxist readings of culture and economic theory — what specifically we are not told.

In fact their attitudes are a little unclear. Doubtless all will be revealed in volume two. They maintain that at present, the middle ground is a "land undocumented" (p204).

There are also seven appendices: examinations of the main non-government groups in the Australian film industry (producers and exhibitors, unions and guilds, and the Film and Television Producers Association of

About *The Screening of Australia*, one can be hypocritical, question many statements, pick many nits, contest many errors, but it is not quite "a definitive study" so far, it still is a quite useful survey as well as a well done ideological contribution to what has been a fairly meagre contemporary debate, as Dermody and Jacka note.

On the other hand, it's hardly the great book about Mannheim vs the Museum that still remains to be written. At the end, one's left up in the air, awaiting the second volume (the two really should have been published simultaneously).

## AUSTRALIAN CINEMA 1970-1985

By Brian McFarlane (Secker & Warburg/Henemann, 1987, ISBN 0 436 70322 6, hbk \$32.95 pb)

To the proliferating library of books currently available about the Australian film industry, it is a pleasure to welcome Brian McFarlane's *Australian Cinema 1970-1985*, an invaluable and entertaining exploration of the themes to be found in local productions over the last decade and a half.

As McFarlane explains in his introduction, his aim is to examine the kinds of films produced by the new Australian cinema, and in Chapter 3 he explains why he rejected other approaches to the material (the chronological careers of directors etc). It's all too easy for book reviewers (or film reviewers for that matter) to discuss not the book that's been written, and the stated aims of the author, but the book (or film) the reviewer thinks ought to have been written.

McFarlane's reasons for opting for the thematic approach are amply self-evident though the format does bring with it the problem of overlapping when a particular film is discussed within more than one thematic group.

The themes McFarlane has chosen are: *Projecting Australia and Australians*; *Misreading Rural Landscapes*; *The Crisis, Personal Relationships between Men and Women*; *Growing Up and History Lessons*; and he discusses a number of films within each thematic group in an entertaining, perceptive, lucid manner that's most impressive. Above all the book is a very good read, and with its own play index, will make an important reference guide.

McFarlane's knowledge of and affection for Australian film (and art and poetry) add a great deal to his comments about the films, and he is especially good when talking about the use of landscape and landscape and in his coverage of the historical films.

There are, as noted above, quite a few overlaps. To take one example at random, Michael Padovani's *Moving Out* is discussed on p101 (the chapter on *The City*) as being the best of the steady stream, from 1982 onwards, of city and youth films; it is discussed again on p107 (the piece on *Growing Up*), and on such occasions, the basic outline of the film is described. This pattern is repeated on numerous occasions throughout the book, and unwary readers may sometimes

think they are reading something read the day before.

Like all of us, McFarlane has his favourite films, and his favourite directors (and at least one producer) he obviously loathes. Most of these likes and dislikes are fairly obvious, but it was good to see McFarlane championing the career of Richard Franklin, a director too often ignored (at least in Sydney). McFarlane's reference to Franklin's *Amorismundo* (*Dark And Dangerous*, surely the best Hitchcock film Hitchcock never made, a welcome and I look forward to reading, some time in the future. McFarlane's comments about *Link*, to my mind a masterly thriller, when, I wonder, will it appear in our cinema?

McFarlane very neatly probes the bottom of the *Man From Snowy River*, but he unaccountably seems to like *Norman Loves Rose* a derivative and fairly drabbed comedy — but then there's no accounting for taste.

There are some rather curious omissions in the book. In the excellent chapter on *City* films, I was looking forward to comments on Ken Gurnea's *The City's Edge* (an understated picture) and Bert Delling's wry-wonderly good *Dead Easy*, but neither one is even mentioned. Perhaps McFarlane hasn't seen them, certainly their distribution was very very limited. And I wondered why in the *Growing Up* (or maybe *City*) chapter, John Dugan's *One Night Stand* was ignored: it was released in 1984, well within the period the book covers, but doesn't rate a mention.

And finally, inevitably, there are a few minor errors in the book. David Hemmings didn't direct *Melanie* (1986), at least as far as the film's credits are concerned. Simon Wincer was responsible for that turkey. And we're twice told that Sumner Locke Elliott wrote the book on which Robyn Nevin's film *The More Things Change* was based, as far as I know that was an original screenplay (by Moya Wood).

These points aside, and a nagging complaint that McFarlane is so fond of the expression *rise on scene* that he uses it three times in four consecutive paragraphs, *Australian Cinema 1970-1985* is warmly recommended.

David Stratton

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JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE: Left to right: Previewing the image while using the image library, notes for dialogue, narration or camera

## A BYTE OF THE APPLE

**IN PAST** 'Computers by Menckap' articles I have assumed readers have a passing familiarity with the computer hardware and terminology, and I have tried to cut through the jargon. Some understanding of computers is now almost essential. If you are not actually using computers, then you are certainly taking the hardest path to efficiency in an industry where that will cost you money. But remember, in the end it is always the machine that is important.

The past computer applications I have mentioned over the years have all been programs that run on the hard and software standard set by IBM. So far I have not written about the Apple Macintosh, which is equally popular with the film industry.

### WIMPS AND WYSIWYG

The reason may be that I don't have a Macintosh, and so haven't been touched by the almost religious fervor of Mac users. However, I do have a number of them around the office and every time I use one I feel the standard interface, what the computer industry is calling **WIMPS** — Windows, Icons, Menus, and Pull-down menus — so much easier to use that it is hard to recommend anything else to beginners, despite the high price of the equipment.

The Macintosh screen and operating system is also the best example of **WYSIWYG**

(that's What You See is What You Get, pronounced wizzzywig, I'm told). This has made it a natural for word processing programs that include page layout features, and the current rush of desktop publishing systems.

I suggest that "desktop publishing" is just another bit of jargon for one of the stages we are going through in realizing the full value of the computer. It seems that anything that used to print out what was on the screen is now called a desktop publishing program, but for Storyboarder it is probably a better description of the use of the program. There are better programs available for on-screen presentation of computer-generated "Slide Shows" than this.

Storyboarder on the other hand, especially in its dual column mode, can truly lay claim to the title.

The manual supplied with the demonstration disc mentions that Storyboarder and Scriptwriter can be used in conjunction, but it doesn't say how this might happen. It may be as simple as a cut and paste of specific sections of your script into the text boxes of Storyboarder but the suggestion is of something more.

### ARTWORK PREPARATION

If you don't wish to draw your own images there is a large range of prepared clip art libraries available with complete files of people, cars, landscapes etc. that can be cut out and altered to produce

professional results.

Digitizers available for the Macintosh include ThunderScan, which replaces the print head on the Apple printer and scans flat artwork and photos line by line through a simple optical system. This software helps break the image down into gray levels that can be made up of varying textures. The resolution on line work is good but the halftone images are like very coarse newspaper pictures.

There are also devices that allow you to feed video images from a camera or a videotape recorder frame by frame. These are stored in the MacPaint format. And as the desktop publishing gush continues there will be better quality screens and digitizers available.

### SCRIPTWRITING AND STORYBOARDING

The subtext of the Apple Macintosh in the film, TV and related industries is not really surprising. This is a visually oriented machine. I'm sure that most people bought the Mac as a business machine for its graphics and paint systems — based on creative play — and suffered from the lack of heavyweight business programs for years. The promise of creating storyboard images and using database programs for their filing was thought to be just around the corner.

After playing with MacPaint, and realizing that skill is still required to draw things, especially with a "mouse", we

have had to wait for affordable graphics tablets and devices which digitize photos and illustrations that can then be manipulated by the computer.

The market advantage of the IBM PC and its clones has been removed by a number of truly innovative programs for the Macintosh that use the small, high resolution screen and the faster microprocessor to advantage.

In the US there is a lot of software available for the industry. One notable range, produced by American Intelligence, is called **MACPATS** (Film Advertising Television System). This is a suite of eight programs: Scriptwriter, Storyboarder, Production Planner, Budget Planner, Directory/Calendar, Contracts, Talent, and Travel. In all, they would cover most aspects of film and TV production. Other programs, such as the New Zealand-developed Film Management System (FMS), attack script breakdown, scheduling, budgeting and accounting.

The distributors of FMS showed me Storyboarder about a year ago. After a brief test by some experienced film users the general opinion was that the program would be very useful if it weren't too full of 'bugs'.

There is now a new distributor and a new version (Version 1.7) which has apparently fixed all the earlier problems and added some essential features such as output to the Apple laser printer. Along with the new version, the new manual boasts that this is now a



movement can be entered for each frame, selecting the destination frame of the image, zooming in.

**Computers continue to make their way into almost every aspect of the film industry. FRED HARDEN tries on an Apple Macintosh for size, and looks at two of its programs, Storyboarder and Scriptwriter.**

desktop publishing program. So, what does it do?

As you can see from the accompanying images, Storyboarder makes up storyboard panels of pictures and text boxes from images that can be created in a number of ways. It can also replay the images in sequence at a rate selected for each frame, but this is dependent on the speed that the Mac can play back from disc, and the size of its memory. It is not really capable of long sequences of true animation (labeled by the manual "inter-frame animation") but there is a "Burst" mode that holds a few frames in memory and flickers them at up to 24 times a second to give a short, but true, motion effect.

On replay there is a selection of transitions available such as fades, wipes, flips and slide on and

off. After the frame is completed there is a limited range of animation effects ("intra-frame animation") that can take the static drawn image and add a jerry zoom in or out, make a cutout area slide around to match the path made by the cursor, or flip the image vertically or laterally. It would take a lot of ingenuity to make even a single animated board look good with these techniques, but that is not Storyboarder's forte.

Most users will forget the animation and use the program to lay out storyboards for printing out on the Apple ImageWriter dot matrix printer or, even better, the LaserWriter. For this, Storyboarder is fast and simple to use. As a formatting tool for MacPaint images alone it is fairly expensive, but it would pay for itself, taking into account the time needed

to produce the same result by cutting and pasting by any other means.

## MAKING IT MOVE

To help create the initial images, there is a range of screen ratio masks that can be used to create the pictures or to cut them off later. These change the MacPaint aspect ratio (1.33:1) to TV sets size, Academy or widescreen formats.

MacPaint draws pictures for any images stored in the Mac's (PCT format) are imported into the program and stored as images in a Master List Image Library. This process is a simple extension of the Macintosh Move command. When selecting the images, a low resolution image of the picture appears at the bottom left of the screen when the title is selected, and the image and its title are moved into the Storyboarder library.

To add these frames, the Macintosh Clipboard is used with Storyboarder's Cut, Copy, Paste and Undo commands. This allows you to change and rearrange the order in which the frames appear. Moving the highlighted image name also moves any intra-frame animation or effects and timings. If you prefer a more graphical way of shuffling the images you can use the Shift Shuffle command and when two or more frames are on the screen, a pair of small numbered boxes appear in the corners of the frame and by clicking the mouse on one and transferring it to the

desired position, the image is redrawn in the new position. The notes relating to this frame are also carried.

Depending on the aspect ratio you have chosen, you can display one to nine images with a notes box beneath and print out up to 12 images a page. The notes can be printed at the side of the frame if desired. To enter the notes, you select the box with the mouse and enter text as you do with a word processor.

For printing you can choose alternative fonts and print a header and footer centred on each page. You can select vertical or horizontal page orientation. From the Page Setup menu you can also select an adjusted full-frame format from the smaller MacPaint cropped screen. Page numbers and frame numbers can also be shown.

If you wish to use the simple animation functions, the manual takes you through the steps in a clear and understandable manner.

## SCRIPTWRITER AT WORK

That people actually write scripts without word processors now seems quaint. On a feature or TV series, where re-writes and revisions mean that a script typist is employed almost full-time making changes, not using a computer results in headless reams.

The only dedicated scriptwriting program I have seen required you to memorise a complicated sequence of control characters, and you never



**SCREEN TIME:** Shuffle allows you to rearrange the order of on-screen images.

know what the page was going to look like until you typed it. The other alternative is to use a wordprocessing program you are familiar with and a keyboard macro program such as the Australian-developed SmartKey. This program lets you set up a number of two-key sequences on the keyboard that, for example, print out the character's name in capitals, center it on the page, move down two lines and indent the paragraph to the selected position. It is still necessary to re-number pages and scenes and the "continue" on the bottom of pages.

There are programs such as Scripter (mentioned in *Movies By Macintosh Pt 1*, CP 51, May 1988), that are used to change the page ends and scene numbers which have been marked with special characters "embedded" in the file.

There are a number of formats that try out for a dedicated scriptwriting word processor. The ability of the Macintosh to show what the finished format will be like makes it a natural choice for the computer. Scriptwriter from American Intellectual looks like a perfect partner.

From my short time working with the demonstration version, this is a simple-to-learn word processing program with a number of options that make it attractive to the film, television or advertising writer. For a computer beginner it may be the only one necessary.

Scriptwriter allows you to have multiple file editing windows open concurrently. If you change a detail, such as the location or occupation of your hero, then you can move through the document to the reference concerned and revise each one. This feature can be used to check up on what you called the minor character in scene 120, in addition to standard global search, find and replace functions.

On startup, a selection from one of the three formats is made: straight letter or document writing, screenplay or dual-column A/V.

In the screenplay modes a Writing Palette can be selected which shows a range of codes along the bottom of the screen and the Apple cloverleaf-and-number key combination that can be used instead of the results.

These are the keys that set



DESTRUCTIVE age up from shock

WOT! She's been seen on your cinema screen.



Image destroys anything screen is weaker.

WOT! ...is becoming more wicked. In this



Unfurling drama to show past scenes, scene in position instantly.

WOT! reveals issue of Cinema Papers we call



Cover high spins to end problems in detail

WOT! AAARRRR! ...drama, gorge. ... WOT! you why. Out Now!

**WORDS AND IMAGES:** An imaginary ad campaign for the March issue of Cinema Papers, the "Violence On The Screen" edition.

up, automatic scene-setting position on the screen, placement of NIGHT and DAY (can be changed to EVENING) and INT and EXT (which can be spelled out in full). You can also select the position and capitalization of character names (but you will still need some kind of Macro program to reduce the character names to a two-key sequence).

Scriptwriter automatically adds a CONTINUED or MORE if a scene or dialogue goes to the next page and it tries not to break dialogue or move single lines. The page numbering is also handled so that revisions become relatively painless to enter.

All the other formatting requirements such as stage directions, dialogue placement, and automatic scene numbering are called from this menu. It can be turned off, and once the key combinations become natural, the program is potentially fast. You do not enter or hit a

return key at the end of an entry. Just press the next key combination and the cursor jumps to the pre-set position, eg, down two lines and tab in three stops. Format the left and right margins.

Scriptwriter strives when the standard audiovisual two column script is required (that's where one side is audio and the other video or picture). Here the onscreen dual column format exactly matches the printout, and editing can take place independently in each of the columns or synchronized across them. For example, if you need to insert a new scene with its own video then the script reformat to allow the insert. Again there is the ability to open multiple file windows (and cut and paste from them via the clipboard), automatic page numbering and, if you need it, automatic scene numbering.

Scriptwriter works on any 512K Macintosh, with an external drive recommended,

but in the words of the owner-enthusiastic advertising, it is "optimized" for the Mac Plus and the Apple Laserwriter Plus. A hard disc is obviously an advantage for long scripts and it cuts open the access time for reading from disc.

Don't worry about the Americanism of Scriptwriter; the formats are very adaptable and can be changed to match the look of your existing scripts. If you have already written your script using MacWrite or Microsoft Word, Scriptwriter can read these files and reformat them.

For further information and for demonstration discs of Scriptwriter and Storyboarder contact Bruce Parry at Flashboards Post Production, 96 Charlotte Street, Crown West, Sydney Ph. (02) 438 1868. The current price for Storyboarder is \$990 and Scriptwriter is \$350.

The Thunderbox digitizer is available through most Macintosh sales outlets.

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Open Channel has for hire a broadcast standard television studio with Newsstate facility, inboard and outboard recorders, production and new post production facilities as well as VHS recording and editing systems. Qualified technical staff are available to assist where necessary.

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Open Channel runs courses in all aspects of video production. Introductory weekend workshops are held for basic point-to-point operation. Our comprehensive 12 week courses also cover script writing, production management, directing and editing. Workshops are held regularly for children and special workshops can be organised for groups and organisations on request.



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2. (Yes/often)	1	1	1	10	9	1	0
3. (Yes/sometimes)	1	1	1	10	9	1	0
4. (No)	1	1	1	10	9	1	0

## MARCH 1987

**Abstract** The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a 12-week, low-intensity, supervised exercise program on the physical and psychological health of sedentary, middle-aged, obese women. The study was a randomized, controlled trial. The subjects were randomly assigned to either an exercise group or a control group. The exercise group performed a 12-week, low-intensity, supervised exercise program. The control group did not exercise. The subjects were assessed at baseline and at 12 weeks. The exercise group showed significant improvements in physical and psychological health compared to the control group. The exercise group showed significant improvements in body mass index, waist circumference, and blood pressure. The exercise group also showed significant improvements in self-esteem, body image, and quality of life. The control group showed no significant changes in any of the variables measured. The results of this study suggest that a 12-week, low-intensity, supervised exercise program can improve the physical and psychological health of sedentary, middle-aged, obese women.

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100 Journal of Management

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**Federal Acquisition & —** *(Continued On Next Page)*

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**Chronic, Recurrent, and Severe Depression**



**Abstract**

② See also other films based on Flanagan and Flanagan's novel: *Whispering Willows* (Dolbycolor) — R — See *Flanagan's Whispers*.

**Background** The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of and risk factors for

[illegible]

**Section reviewed:** Classified F by the Film Community Board  
Reviewed at the Board (Great Film Community Board) to identify if  
Problem (c), d, k or n: USA/The Philippines  
SDM-006 Village People 1977

**Section reviewed:** Classified A by the Film Community Board  
Reviewed at the Board (Great Film Community Board) to identify if  
(a) See also under Film Requested Without  
Description - E -- H -- Significant Submissions  
and Films Requested Rejection  
(b) See also under Film Requested Without  
Description - I -- M -- for Mature Audiences  
and Films Requested Refusal/Deferral

Notes: The length of the line segment (the line crossing) obtained on November 1, 1988, that we obtain, the number of lines (about 100) is small.

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Figure	Copyright owner
Figure 1	Copyright owner
Figure 2	Copyright owner

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**Lat Synergy.** The goal is to make the situation in English Southern Pine Corp. of 17-18,000 ha. Lat Pine Co., Hong Kong, 1981. The Southern Pine Co. of 17-18,000 ha. Lat Pine Co., Hong Kong, 1981. The Southern Pine Co. of 17-18,000 ha. Lat Pine Co., Hong Kong, 1981.

11. **What is the purpose of the "References" section in a research paper?**

[illegible]

**Keywords:** child sexual abuse; disclosure; social support

[illegible]

1. **Introduction**  
 2. **Background**  
 3. **Methodology**  
 4. **Results**  
 5. **Conclusion**  
 6. **References**

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**Abstract**

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Journal of Internal Medicine 247: 399–405



Film Victoria

# INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS' FUND

Film Victoria's Independent Filmmakers' Fund provides funds for short films of high innovative and creative potential which will develop the talent and skills of Victorian filmmakers. Applicants to the fund are expected to demonstrate that they could make a substantial contribution to the future of the Victorian film industry.

It is specifically seeking those Victorian filmmakers working in narrative drama or documentary film or video who have already displayed potential and whose filmmaking career will be assisted by having the opportunity to further express their talents.

The fund is, in the first instance, aimed at developing directorial and producing talent. However people with proven skills in other areas such as cinematography or writing may apply.

It is hoped that the films and tapes financed by the fund will have sales potential and appeal to a market which includes conventional forms of exhibition (television, film festivals, etc.).

The financial limits of the fund dictate that the films financed would normally be of the duration of 15 television hours or half-hour. The fund is not a low budget feature fund, nor will it provide assistance to highly experimental or avante garde works.

Applicants to the fund will be required to submit a script, budget and marketing proposal.

**Applications close 5 pm, Friday 31 July 1987**  
For detailed guidelines and application forms contact: **Kerrin McIlwain, Project Officer (Creative & Cultural Development)**

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# THE PANTHER TAKES THE PLUNGE

**At last Australia has a martial arts superhero. Action specialist Brian Tranchard-Smith has brought Jason Blada, aka the Panther, to the screen. JIM SCHEMBRI reports.**

AUSTRALIA'S premiere film director, Brian Tranchard-Smith, has just finished work on two cheap socky martial arts action films in Perth, *The Day Of The Panther* and *The Snake Of The Panther*. The films, shot simultaneously for less than one million dollars apiece, are intended for the international video market and will introduce Australia (and the world) to Australia's answer to Chuck Norris, Ed Swank. Tranchard-Smith is not claiming the film is a cultural triumph.

Tranchard-Smith was brought onto the project early in March at two days' notice. Four days of shooting under the direction of the

PANTHER ACTION "Director Mask" takes a fall: director Brian Tranchard-Smith, nicknamed "Puggy", Ed Swank in pin-up mode

film's stunt co-ordinator Peter West showed that someone with a slightly more experienced hand was needed.

The circumstances were unfortunately similar to *Turley Shoot* when Treachard-Smith was brought in two weeks before shooting and had the original budget cut in half.

"It was worse," he says. "This is the toughest movie job I've ever done. The whole shoot was turned upside down."

Treachard-Smith had no pre-production time to prepare or rework the script. He went straight into shooting a major fight sequence on the first day and found then that major script changes were needed. These included extensive dialogue rewrites and structural alterations. A new pre-credit sequence established the relationships between characters to make sense of a long fight scene that was originally intended to start the film.

"If you have to spend extra money replacing a director, then you should look at other elements that ought to be changed otherwise you're just pouring good money after bad." He also recast some of the supporting cast along with "important" roles, including John Stanton as the fourth bad friend.

"To a certain extent directing the film was a little like directional theatrics. I would get to a location to work with supporting actors (half) yet not to do a scene that had certain problems. I had to do a great deal of thinking on my feet and thinking fast, and still get five minutes of screen time in a day. I was shooting two pictures a day."

But he is increasingly confident that the finished product will be what was intended, two low budget films with huge production values. He doesn't mind it to be the artistic and commercial wool that *Turley Shoot* was.

"Despite production problems on the *Puncher* films, I am totally confident that these films will carve their own on the international marketplace. There are no box office benefits. It's not a USA film, there is no hefty net whitewash."

Treachard-Smith unashamedly describes the films as a "martial arts adolescent movie adventure with as much credible linked non-stop action as possible" and his new star as someone who is:

"intuitive, has on-the-spot, and, as tends to happen a lot in my movies, gets his dirt off a lot, and has a good set of pectorals."

There's also lots of action for the cheap socky crowd, including eight fight scenes in the first film and nine in the other. But, action of the right kind, of course, according to Treachard-Smith. "While I've made it tough, I haven't made it impossibly unpleasant. There's no dwelling on pain. People do bleed occasionally but they bleed properly."

Part of Treachard-Smith's confidence in the product stems from his view of the martial arts audience that made his movie. The *Man From Hong Kong* was one of Australia's most successful action films.

"The martial arts audience goes from about 15 years old and peaks at around 25, it's that area that has the big adolescent male audience. There are no martial arts aficionados and they constitute a strong group. But the dedicated martial arts people are basically the adolescents who want to watch an invincible superhero who's invincibly fast with feet and hands. The audience is primarily male, but there is also a significant number of females. If the hero is attractive they won't mind watching him suffer, provided that the violent action is not too brutal."

The films were shot on Hama and blown up to 35mm for possible theatrical release before they are unleashed in every video store "from Vladivostok to Australia."

A third *Puncher* film, *Escape*, is planned to begin shooting early next year. Treachard-Smith has not yet been approached to direct



## The N.S.W. Film Corporation's Government Documentary Division is updating its Trade Register

The Corporation has, in New South Wales, the sole responsibility to make, promote, distribute and exhibit short and documentary films for or on behalf of any department of the Government or any statutory body representing the Crown.

The NSWFC's Government Documentary Division is not a production house - all work is placed with the private sector of the film industry.

Interested film, video and audio-visual writers, producers and production organisations are invited to contact the Corporation's Government Documentary Division with background details in writing.

Further enquiries please telephone Edna Wilson or Peter Dineart on 57 5875.

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 Producer: ...  
 Screenplay: ...  
 Editor: ...  
 Music: ...  
 Cinematographer: ...  
 Production designer: ...  
 Costume designer: ...  
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**OPERATION LIVE FIRE**  
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**TASMANIAN FILM CORPORATION**

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**AUSTRALIAN FILM**  
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**SUPERHERALS**  
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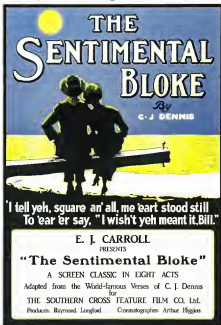
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